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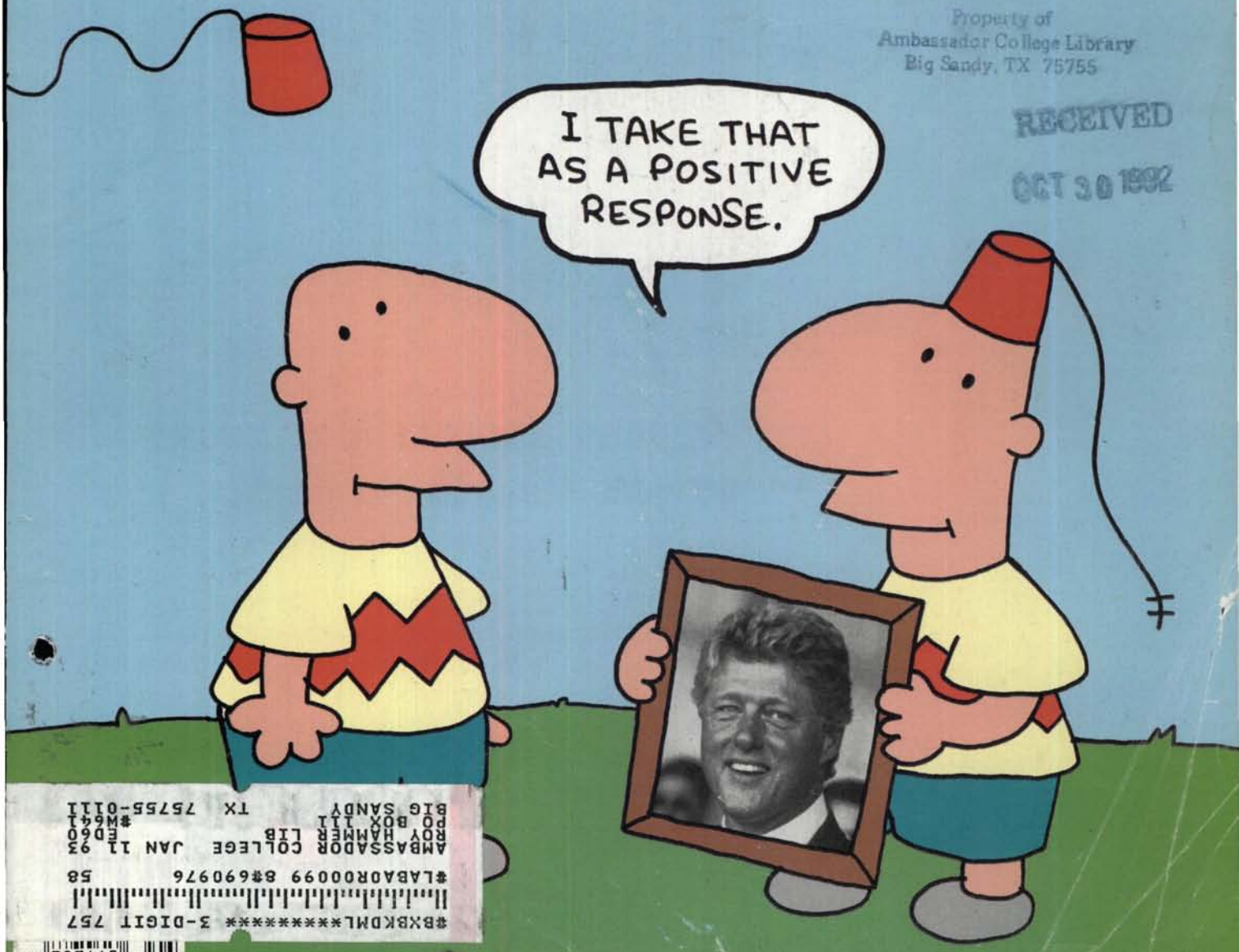

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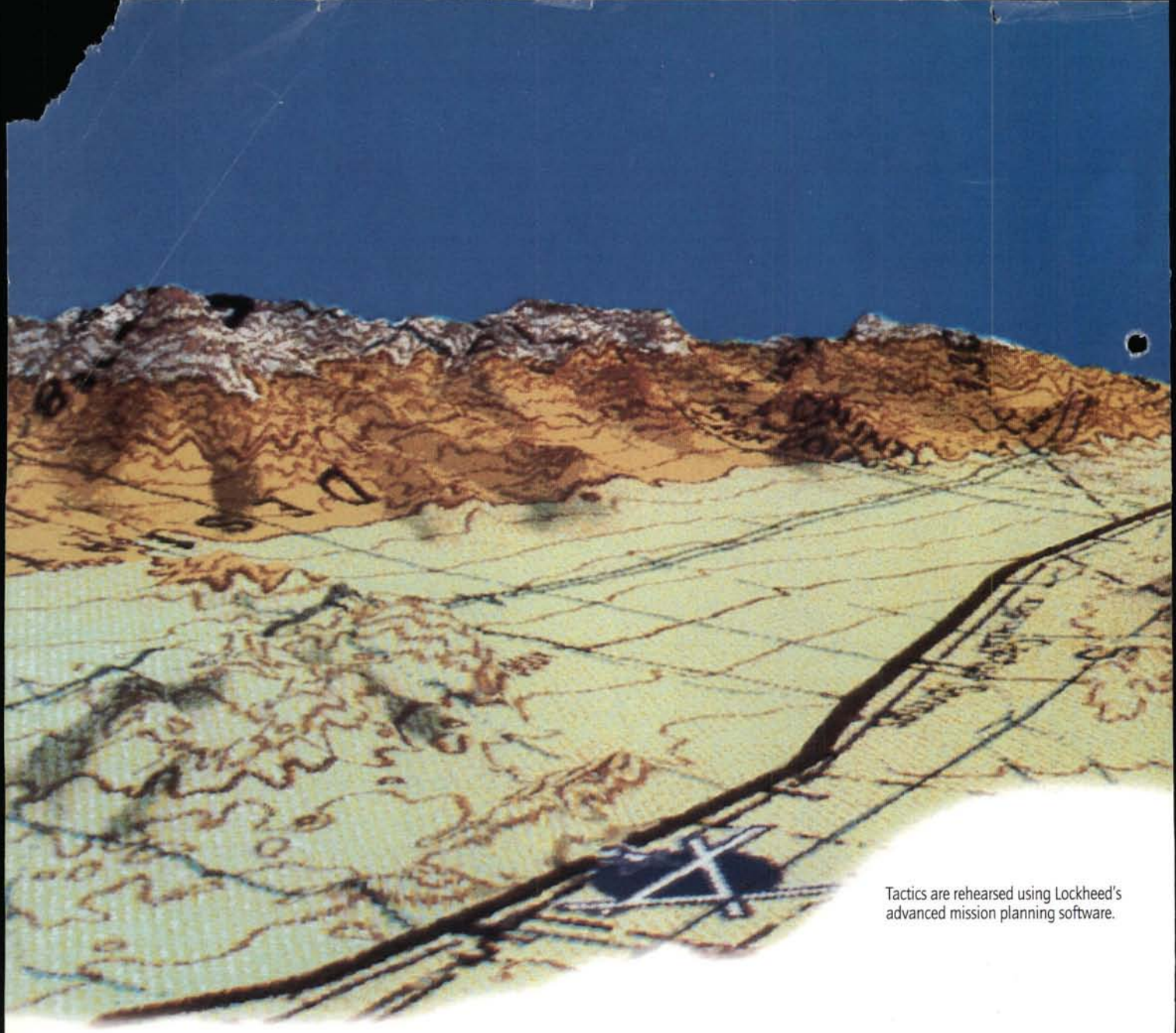

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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NOVEMBER 9, 1992

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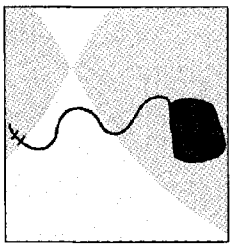

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CORRESPONDENCE

Proper punishment

To the editors:

Your denunciation of the hate crimes bill now pending before Congress and recently endorsed by Bill Clinton is simplistic in the extreme ("Crime and Punishment," October 12). This bill, introduced by Charles Schumer of New York, authorizes heightened punishment for conduct that is already a federal crime whenever that conduct is "motivated by hatred, bias, or prejudice, based on [the] race, ... religion, ... gender, or sexual orientation" of the victim. The bill, contrary to your editorial, does *not* "punish opinions rather than conduct," and it certainly doesn't require "federal judges to conduct an inquisition into a criminal's thoughts and beliefs." All it does is codify the judgment that conduct that is already criminal is especially heinous when the criminal can be shown to have stalked or targeted the victim on the basis of the victim's race, religion, sex, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

To deny that violent crimes are particularly evil when they are of this character, as your editorial appears to do, is to imply that the Jewish victims of Kristallnacht suffered no legal wrong beyond the breaking of their shop windows, that the African-American victims of racial lynching suffered no legally cognizable injury distinct from manslaughter, or that the victims of gay-bashing suffer no recognizable harm besides cuts and bruises.

The truth is that being victimized by virtue of one's race, gender, or other immutable and morally neutral personal characteristic is universally acknowledged to represent an affront to one's humanity and dignity—over and above whatever tangible bruises the wrongdoer has inflicted, and quite apart from what you call the "underlying political or social attitudes" that might have animated the wrongdoer or may have been expressed in the course of the ensuing violence.

When you accuse me of failing to make distinctions that "should be familiar to first-year law students," you betray a shallower comprehension than you realize. As a vocal defender of the Supreme Court's decisions in the flag-burning and hate-speech cases, you give the First Amendment a bad name when you fail to distinguish between the forbidden punishment of ideas, opinions, and viewpoints and the permissible punishment of acts that victimize people based on their race, sex, or religion.

LAURENCE H. TRIBE
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the editors:

In your recent editorial on hate crimes, you dismiss two recent Supreme Court decisions that clearly suggest this bill is constitutional, *Barclay* v. *Florida* and *Dawson* v. *Delaware*. As you stated, they did not specifically hold that Congress can pass a hate crimes sentencing enhancement. But in *Barclay* the Court upheld a trial court's enhancement of a defendant's sentence based upon that defendant's racial hatred motive for the crime—exactly what this bill does. And in *Dawson* the Court specifically rejected the very proposition suggested by your editorial, stating that "the Constitution does not erect a *per se* barrier to the admission of evidence concerning one's beliefs or associations at sentencing simply because those beliefs and associations are protected by the First Amendment."

Some of the nation's pre-eminent authorities, from both sides of the political spectrum, testified before my subcommittee that this bill is constitutionally sound and laudable in its intent. This was also the overwhelming conclusion reached by the House of Representatives, which passed the bill on October 3, 1992, with broad bipartisan support. You have taken a position that is, in fact, more extreme than that adopted by the ACLU. Your position would threaten an enormous body of anti-discrimination law, both state and federal. For example, if, as you suggest, the *RAV* v. *St. Paul* decision casts a constitutional shadow over H.R. 4797, it would cast the same shadow over Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bars employer discrimination motivated by an employee's race, gender, religion, or other minority status.

The statistics you cite in your editorial bear witness to the chilling epidemic of hate crime that is sweeping through our country. My bill is an effective and constitutional first step in turning the tide of these deplorable and un-American acts of hate and bigotry. It deserves to be passed into law.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER
U.S. House of Representatives
Chairman, Subcommittee on Crime and Criminal Justice
Washington, D.C.

Time out

To the editors:

The versions of George Bush's World War II "heroics" go even beyond Sidney Blumenthal's finely tuned account ("War Story," October 12). A recent Veterans of Foreign Wars magazine profile (September 1992) has Ensign Bush piloting his burning aircraft on to the target where, "before bailing out, he dropped his bombs on the Japanese radio station." There is no mention of two crewmen—period!

ROBERT HUDDLESTON
Mercersburg, Pennsylvania

To the editors:

I was just this morning reading Sidney Blumenthal's "War Story" when I nearly choked over this portion of the article: "Then came a family crisis. With the war [in Vietnam] still raging in 1972, Jeb Bush, who had pulled a low lottery number in the draft—number 26—contemplated becoming a conscientious objector.... But it never came to that: the draft for Vietnam ended one day before Jeb, who had already had his physical, might have been called."

Time out. My number in that same draft lottery was 72. I not only "had already had" my physical, I got my induction notice. I went. I'd like somebody to explain how it is that I with number 72 had to go, and Jeb Bush with number 26 didn't.

MICHAEL R. WILLIAMS
Arlington Heights, Illinois

Backlash

To the editors:

Like all practitioners of a simplistic ideology, Germaine Greer manages to attach cosmic importance to banal events ("The Backlash Myth," October 5). Let me relate that, as a man, I too have been flipped off by a truck driver. I have been flipped off by common motorists. And, I shudder as I relate this, I have even been flipped off by a woman! (Let's be clear about what this means; it means a digit up your rectum!) Even more shocking, this female motorist gave me the finger because *I* (a man!) wasn't going fast enough!

No doubt Greer will assume that this belligerent female driver was a victim: forced to be hostile and aggressive by a competitive, patriarchal, and capitalist system, she can't be blamed for her actions. But I would guess something different: that my assailant—just like any other normal human being—was, and is, sometimes happy, sometimes sad, and sometimes—well, pissed off by the everyday give and take of life. In other words, her actions were completely meaningless, just as I suspect the actions of that truck driver were on that fateful day when I flipped off Greer.

One other note: isn't it a bit disingenuous to bemoan how harshly women and feminists continue to be oppressed in the same piece in which we learn that the author is "equipped with the latest in German ABS systems"? I bet that truck driver doesn't have a German ABS system.

KEN NUNNEY
Los Angeles, California

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To the editors:
Despite Germaine Greer's attempt to "be quite clear about what the two-finger salute means ... Fuck you and bugger you," I'm sorry to say that she has misinterpreted the gesture. I cannot begin to imagine where she derived such a colorful explanation (a feminist dictionary? her own imagination?), but actually it is simply the British version of our own hallowed "bird," and the two fingers signify not "up (both of) yours" but refer to the posture of the legs (as in, "spread 'em, boy"). If Greer has any doubts, any Britisher between the ages of 35 and 55 should be able to confirm my interpretation of this arcane piece of pop iconology.

MICHAEL SULLIVAN
Trinidad, California

To the editors:
Naomi Wolf and feminists like her are examples of how a little bit of knowledge goes a short way ("Father Figures," October 5). I am tired of women's libbers, frequently of Jewish background, denigrating Judaism and equating it with an anti-woman position. This is often done in an effort to be even-handed when criticizing Paul and his disciples in their anti-woman stance in the New Testament.

Wolf's quote of Kedushin 1:1 in the Talmud is inaccurate. The phrase is more correctly read: A woman is (considered) married in (one of) three ways—by silver, by contract, or by sexual intercourse. The silver represents a ring. This is not unlike our custom. The contract is the marriage license—not too different from our American law. The last item means that if a man has coitus with a single woman, it constitutes marriage. This Talmudic injunction does not debase a woman, it protects her.

On the subject of Judaism in regard to woman's equality, I doubt that Wolf and other feminist Bible-bashers are familiar with Genesis 21:12, in which God tells Abraham, "In all that Sarah says to you, *obey* her." The word or idiom for "obey" is still used in modern Hebrew today. There is no verse in the thirty-nine books of the Hebrew Bible in which a woman is admonished to obey her husband.

LILLIAN FREUDMANN
Storrs, Connecticut

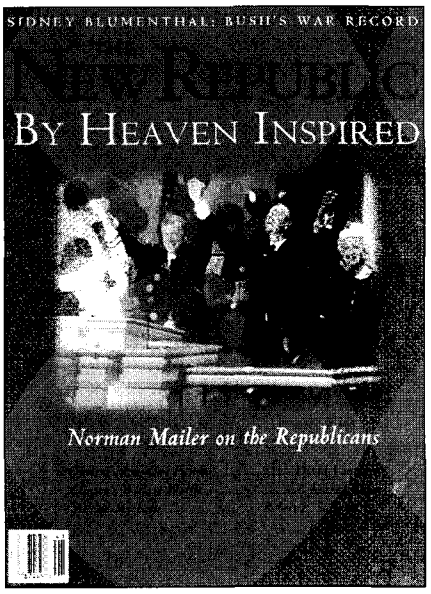
To the editors:
Naomi Wolf correctly identifies the patriarchal use of Ephesians 5:22-23. However, it should be noted that the preceding verse introduces and controls the passage: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." The scriptural ideal is not unilateral gender submission but rather mutual submission under the Lordship of Christ.

FRED W. ANDREA III
Savannah, Georgia

School drill

To the editors:
As a longtime teacher I've seen a lot of loony advice offered up from the media, but "Back to School" (September 28) is definitely my choice for the fruitcake award. You offer the solution to the nation's educational woes: restrict toilet trips by fourth-graders from certain socio-economic areas. And hire drill sergeants whose sole qualification seems to be organizing desktops and bathroom lines.

For nearly twenty years I have taught the children nobody else wants. It is no picnic. But "control" and "order in the classroom" just aren't the issue, not in the simplistic way you pose them, anyway. The issue is figuring out a curriculum



that makes sense to children the socio-politico-economic system has failed. Our educational system is in desperate need of renewal. It isn't going to come from Washington or NCOs who run classroom boot camps or editors whose only information about inner-city classrooms comes from reading other editors.

The Exxon Education Foundation gave me a grant to travel around the country for a year looking at the way math is taught in primary grades. I was in rich schools and poor schools, and as I sat here thinking about your editorial I realized that "control" was not the issue in any of them. When the curriculum is really good, it engages the students, and stupid things such as when the children will go to the bathroom are just never an issue.

SUSAN OHANIAN
Schenectady, New York

To the editors:
The teaching methods used by the military may have given students a feeling of self-worth and accomplishment, and I agree with Diana Barone that "the kids want this orderliness." But if Barone had tried her techniques in my school or in thousands of others across the country, she would have received an "unsatisfactory" check on her evaluations.

Schools see themselves not as an island of safety and comfort from often chaotic homes, but rather somewhere on a continuum from being "forced" to tolerate an indisciplined style to openly advocating the advantages of its "individualism." You refer to the "performance of common tasks." But most schools want each child to seek his own goals at his own speed. You want "exemplars of hard work." But in most schools the word "work" has been replaced by the concept that all students must always feel that they are having fun. You say the retired military "would bring a sense of order." But for most educators, "order" means discipline and discipline means undemocratic authority.

Educators might resist the retirees because of their lack of qualifications to teach 10-year-olds, but they would also resist them because the military knows the uncomfortable truth that discipline is necessary to education.

RICHARD S. BLAKE
East Falmouth, Massachusetts

De-chosen

To the editors:
I would like to clear up a misunderstanding that may have been perpetuated by Weston Kosova's Washington Diarist ("The Chosen," October 19). Kosova described a bookstore encounter with a woman who noisily informed him that, among other things, owing to her status as a child of Jewish-Gentile intermarriage, she was the target of a worldwide conspiracy of ultra-Orthodox Jews who want to kill her. The unnamed woman then gave him a newsletter published by Paraveh, the Alliance of Adult Children of Jewish-Gentile Intermarriage, an organization named specifically by Kosova.

I wish to state publicly that though I am the only other co-founder and officer of Paraveh, I am not the person with whom he spoke. Robin Elizabeth Margolis has confirmed to me that the conversation took place. Her views are her own, and do not reflect those of Paraveh, of myself, or of the hundreds of individuals who have contacted us since Paraveh was launched in 1985.

Effective immediately, I have resigned from Paraveh.

LESLIE GOODMAN-MALAMUTH
Washington, D.C.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Endgame

For democracy, like capitalism, to work properly, it is not enough that success be rewarded. Failure must be punished. To re-elect an incumbent who has failed is to betray the principle of democratic accountability. In 1980, as editor of this magazine, I wrote our editorial endorsing John Anderson for president. The main rationale for that quixotic gesture was that to ratify Jimmy Carter's failed presidency would be "an act of political decadence."

This year's Democratic mantra of "change ... change ... change ..." is a bit fatuous. Nevertheless, saying "no" to a failed incumbent remains the best reason for any still-undecided voter to choose Bill Clinton over George Bush.

In a way, Bush is merely the victim of bad timing. Recessions do happen. Ronald Reagan was lucky enough to get his recession out of the way early on. Ten years ago, Reagan was almost as unpopular as Bush is today. And the case can be made that, in its wrath against Bush, a spoiled citizenry is overreacting to what is, by historical standards, a pretty mild downturn. But people sense, I think correctly, that this recession is different, and reflects problems that go beyond the short run—problems for which the Reagan-Bush actions and inactions of the past twelve years are responsible.

Blaming Congress will not do. Even if the blame-shifting were valid—which it isn't—it amounts to a promise of four more years of gridlock and failure if Bush is re-elected. Lately, Bush supporters have been pleading that America is caught in a worldwide downturn, at the mercy of forces beyond the control of any president. There is a grain of truth in this, but it is a strange defense of the alleged foreign policy master under whose leadership America supposedly bestrides the world.

So Bush is reduced to staking everything on the so-called "character issue." Even this one is a shadow of its former self. The Bushies wisely avoided the Gennifer business and quickly dropped the trip to Moscow. On the draft, they insist (inconsistently) that the concern is only Clinton's changing story, not the avoidance of military service itself. The matter of Clinton's anti-war activities has been refined down to his having protested "in a foreign country."

Clinton certainly has waffled about his draft history, and about other matters as well. Whether he waffles more than the average politician cannot be determined with scientific precision. But George Bush certainly lacks standing to raise this as a disqualifying character flaw. Iran-contra is just the most obvious example. (1986: "The president is convinced that he did not swap arms for hostages.... I support the president's decision ... and I oppose ... any ransom payments." 1987: "I wish ... that I had known that we were trading arms for hostages...." 1992: "You knew about the arms for hostages?" "Yes, and I've said so all along.")

As for Clinton's anti-war protests, Bush has yet to articulate why demonstrating at the U.S. Embassy in London is heinous if demonstrating in Washington is not. The argument that you shouldn't protest abroad while "American boys are dying" is nonsensical. "American boys are dying" was precisely why people were protesting.

The Bush attack on Clinton's character may not change the election, but it has put Clinton on the defensive, character-wise. This is unfair. Clinton is no saint. But he is genuinely admirable in ways that the Bush tar has obscured. Why should even some of Clinton's defenders dismiss his anti-war activities as a "youthful indiscretion"? Young Clinton was morally opposed to the Vietnam War (as were, by around that time, most Americans). He worked to avoid the fighting himself, and also worked to prevent others from having to fight. That certainly puts him on a higher ethical plane than Dan Quayle and others who saved their own skins but didn't lift a finger to save anybody else's.

A Florida reader recently sent me a clip from a local paper. It was a letter to the editor from a former Republican mayor of Sarasota and local 1988 Bush campaign chairman, who was also a Georgetown University classmate of Bill Clinton's. The letter describes how, in 1968, Clinton led efforts by Georgetown students to help Dr. Ralph Abernathy's poverty marchers encamped on the Washington Mall. "The people had no food, no sanitary facilities, no financial resources, and no way to get home. Bill enlisted me to help transport people to bus stations, to bake bread, and to help out those folks who were in a desperate situation."

This episode was reported in Clinton profiles early in the campaign. But, even as a Clinton supporter, I'd allowed myself to forget. It's just one example—part of what Bush is sometimes pleased to call a "pattern of behavior" on Clinton's part. But when we think of Young Clinton now, we tend to see only the precocious schemer for "political viability" (another genuine element, to be sure).

In my book, this election campaign has revealed great character strength in Bill Clinton. First of all, he *ran*, at a time when Bush seemed unbeatable and several likelier Democrats ducked the fight. Clinton wasn't my first choice, but I think better of him and worse of the others because he went for it and they didn't. He's run hard and he's run smart, fighting back from near-death experiences. Whatever happens on November 3, Democrats won't have to feel that we threw this one away, and for that we can be grateful.

It's true that you don't, at least yet, sense any real largeness of character in Clinton. We like that in a president, even if it's a mixed blessing, as with a large character like LBJ. It's hard to imagine, at this point, any heroic multivolume Clinton biographies. Even Jimmy Carter, early on (and again as ex-president), gave off a certain scent of nobility. Clinton, by contrast, seems of ordinary size from the start. But even ordinary size will be an improvement on the incumbent.

What evidence is there that President Clinton will face up to the unpleasant fiscal reality that both he and the failed incumbent have ducked during the campaign? Well, none. But there is this optimistic scenario. Clinton is a bright man. He will have seen what happened to George Bush, who thought he could coast through one more election cycle without biting the bullet. Unlike Bush, Clinton won't even have the comfort of an opposition-party Congress to blame. Knowing that both history and reelection will depend on policies rather different from the ones that got him elected, he'll move quickly to sell the country on some of them. His much-derided "slickness" may even be of service here. That's the optimistic scenario.

"We've got a big philosophical difference here," said George Bush in the last debate. The editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, Robert Bartley, wrote recently: "Republicans ought to be able to win the basic issue of a smaller government versus a bigger government. Recent presidential elections offer no evidence that the electorate wants higher taxes

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

NOVEMBER 9, 1992

CLINTON FOR PRESIDENT

For the better part of two decades, it has been difficult to view the election of a Democrat to the White House as anything but a mixed blessing. For the last four elections, the editors of this magazine have supported a series of Democratic candidates (with the exception of John Anderson in 1980), more out of loyalty than enthusiasm. Looking back, our endorsements progressively honed the art of faint praise, and were written for the most part in a tone of caution and even, in some cases, scarcely concealed dread. The candidates were in every case the lesser of two evils, people for whom the reconstruction of liberalism and the restoration of effective government were decent enough ideas, but ones which always took second billing to the exigencies of Democratic Party politics. We hope—and increasingly believe—that those days of equivocation can now come to an end. In endorsing Bill Clinton and Al Gore, we are not simply voting our hopes over our fears. Least of all are we affirming some party loyalty. We are expressing our belief that they offer the best chance in a generation to bring reform and renewal to a country that desperately needs both.

That opportunity is one that should appeal to principled liberals and conservatives alike. At this ideologically diverse magazine, it has prompted an unnerving and unusual consensus in favor of a political change. Even conservatives must now acknowledge that the Bush administration has proved to be a humiliating end to a curiously inglorious era. In retrospect, conservative government failed even on its own terms. Where social problems came from government, Republicans had neither the courage to abolish nor the interest to reform it. The welfare system, which had come under searching and legitimate scrutiny from conservatives, was left virtually intact. Middle-class entitlements are untouched. Domestic discretionary spending ballooned, and the proportion of government money that is consumed by transfer payments has grown at the expense of the money geared toward infrastructure and investment.

To be sure, much of the current discontent with Bush's economic record is overblown. Bush has suffered with the business cycle; manufacturing is not in the crisis both Ross Perot and Bill Clinton claim; productivity has increased; inflation and interest rates have both been brought down. Moreover, Bush wisely avoided any panic measures to stimulate an economy slowly recovering from its accumulation of private debt. But the president was unable to explain this to the country or to justify his economic prudence, because it would have amounted to a disowning of Ronald Reagan's recklessness and therefore alienated a large section of his base. And this failure to be candid points to a deeper failing. The president has failed to address—let alone tackle—the longer-term causes for American economic sluggishness: the deficit and the need to retrain American workers in the face of a fast-changing globalized economy. If in many areas Bush's restraint was economically prudent, in others it has jeopardized our economic future.

Moreover, when Bush seeks to revive himself, as he did in his State of the Union address last January, this economic dishonesty is compounded by the holograms of ideology: capital gains tax cuts, enterprise zones, a line-item veto, "family values," or some pathetic nonsense about a deficit reduction check-off on tax returns. These slogans are by now an excuse for gross policy lapses, not a means to put them right; after twelve years they reflect less the reality of the American economy than an empty ritual of inaction.

It took the president three years to provide a health care package. Even now, he has done little to promote educational reform or welfare overhaul. With the former, the president has lazily intoned the mantra "choice" while giving only token support to his innovative education secretary. With the latter, he has basically let underfunded local initiatives go on autopilot, showing interest only when the subject provoked a healthy response from focus groups as the campaign loomed. His domestic policy centers on a capital gains tax cut and the panacea of enterprise zones: the first an impediment to a free market and the second a way of postponing effective intervention in the inner city. Meanwhile, the real problems mount.

Frankly, we can see no consistency or meaning in George Bush's domestic record, except a fitful effort to appease public opinion and to win re-election. If he returns to the White House, even this excuse for action will disappear. He represents at this point an almost uniquely ill-suited option for the country. He does not have the credibility to start over; nor does he have a mandate, even from conservatives, to carry on. He has deliv-

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ered neither fiscal restraint nor effective government. His economic plan for the future—cobbled together by James Baker's aides in the days after the convention—carries no weight, since it comes from a president who has long seen economics as a mere adjunct to his short-term political needs.

In foreign affairs, the record is scarcely better. The pristine anti-communism of the early 1980s, which this magazine supported, has since buckled under the weight of its own success. By 1986 Reagan was beginning to embrace the post-cold war world with a fervor that would soon remove a central prop from Republican ascendancy. Bush inherited this precarious political legacy and bungled it. Instead of embracing the democratic revolutions of the late 1980s and using them to formulate a clearly pro-democratic foreign policy, Bush lapsed into an incoherent diplomatic realism. For two years he expended his full energies on sustaining the corpse of the Soviet Union past its natural life and backed the genocidal regime of Saddam Hussein over the democratic government of Israel. His instincts in foreign policy were geared toward the extension of the status quo, whether in Beijing or Belgrade, even in the face of momentous historical shifts. Bush misjudged Eastern Europe; he misread Russia; he built up Saddam, only to engage in a massive effort to halt him; his early support of Maastricht now seems foolhardy, and his appeasement of Beijing morally indefensible. To be sure, no disasters—except the invasion of Kuwait—occurred on his watch. But there was no positive movement in the evolution of American foreign policy either; and no persuasive account of America's post-cold war role in the decades ahead. In its absence, the country runs the risk of a slide into cynicism and fitfulness in its dealings abroad, a trend that Bush deplores but has done his own peculiar best to accelerate.

Bush has done to conservatism what no liberal opponent could have done: he has destroyed it from within. By infusing it with layer upon layer of intellectual dishonesty, he has reduced it to an expedient for the extension of his own power, its positive arguments distilled into the empty code words of Houston, its intellectual legacy reduced to a shrill husk of exclusion. His administration is, in short, degenerate. No wonder in the last few weeks it has not so much faltered as collapsed.

This time, mercifully, there is an alternative. It is not a rival ideology but a practical engagement with the legacy of the last twelve years, an engagement that could and should appeal across traditional ideological lines. Its guiding principle is an attempt to apply the old liberal principles of effective government and civic equality in a world where both seem to be in terminal decline. For the past two decades this magazine, among others, has been engaged in an attempt to give this principle intellectual heft and political realism. We make no apologies for this effort, however Sisyphean the task has sometimes seemed. We refuse to believe that government has no role to play in rescuing our cities from collapse, in turning our welfare system from one of dependency to one of responsibility, in retraining workers who are left behind by the global economy. We continue to uphold the idea that Americans are open to duty and service to their fellow citizens, and that our government and our president are central to that civic enterprise. And we think that in Bill Clinton and Al Gore, we may finally have found the men who have the intellectual edge and moral intuition to put these old and new ideas into practice.

Their philosophy is not, as any reader of these pages will surely know, a reprise of entitlement liberalism. Clinton's economic program is remarkable for its eschewal of the easy palliatives of redistribution. He proposes to raise taxes only on those earning more than $200,000. As rich-soaking goes, this is a mild step (compare it with the Labour Party's doomed tax plans in Britain earlier this year). It's a non-destructive and partial reversal of the regressive tax changes that began in the late Carter years with the capital gains cut and the increase in the payroll tax and continued with the Reagan cuts of 1981. We also like the fact that his plan contains little redistributionist rhetoric, preferring instead to talk about public investment; and that he intends to make it impossible for welfare to be "a way of life" by limiting cash assistance to two years, after which recipients would be required to work. His campaign platform and his Arkansas record suggest that he knows he must tackle the entrenched interests in education and health care if he is to achieve higher levels of excellence and greater access in both. In all these areas, Clinton understands from experience that liberalism will only succeed if it recognizes the follies of its past; if it sees government as something to be reinvented rather than promoted; if it recognizes that citizenship is as much a matter of responsibilities as it is of rights.

On the deficit, we worry that Clinton is too blithe about its fast-growing threat to our economic health. But we are confident that in office he will be forced to make the hard choices on entitlements, because a Democratic Congress and a Democratic president will be unable to avoid accountability any longer. We see no essential conflict between this and a strategy of government investment; indeed, the two are complementary. Clinton should forgo a desperate dash for growth in his first year in order to lay the deficit-cutting groundwork for more sustainable growth in his fourth. The emphasis he has rightly put on education, training, and investment has always been a long-term strategy. He should keep his eyes on the prize and not imperil it with short-term reflation. And besides, Clinton must surely recognize that it will not help him at all to have two years of growth at the beginning of his first term and an economic collapse at the end.

On social policy, the same virtuous dynamic may also kick in. Clinton will be accountable for effective health care reform in a way no Republican president could be. His grasp of policy detail and his public commitment to control health care costs are the best insurance we have that a transition to universal health insurance will not fall prey to the special interests of the health care lobby. Not only will he lose the excuse of gridlock, he will also have the Nixon-goes-to-China card of a Democrat having to

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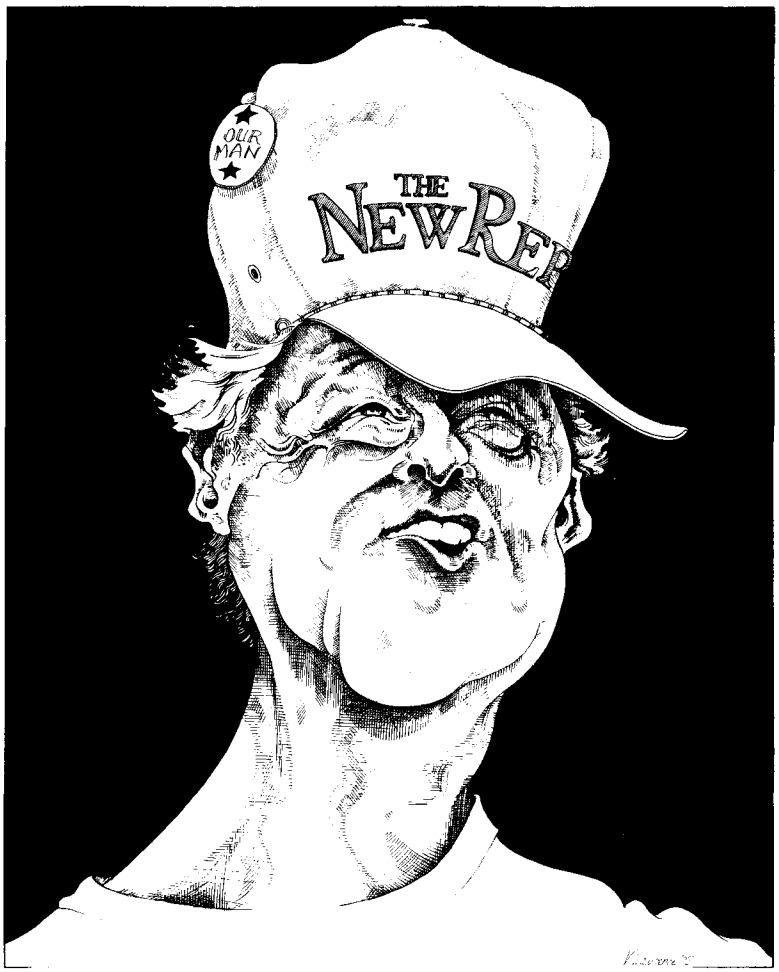
prove his lean government credentials. The same political dynamic that allowed him to confront the National Education Association in Arkansas will operate in Washington to an even greater degree.

Clinton is also more in touch with the cultural reality of today's America than is his opponent. In our view, this matters. It matters that he recognizes women as active and equal participants in the workplace and politics. It matters that his marriage is a partnership, like most Americans'. It matters that he has had daily, working experience with people of a different race; that his relationship with gay Americans is one of familiarity and respect. If the traumatic issues of race, gender, and sexuality are to be addressed with any honesty in our politics and culture, they must be addressed by people who have nothing to prove but their engagement with the issues. Clinton is one of the few men in our public life whose integrity on these matters is unquestionable. That is why he could take on Sister Souljah's hatred without impugning his commitment to racial equality; and why he has been able to insist on equal rights for homosexuals without losing the respect of Reagan Democrats. This kind of integrity is an asset in any human being. In a president, it represents a rare opportunity to find a realistic truce in our cultural and racial wars.



BILL CLINTON BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Abroad, we find Clinton's internationalism a refreshing change from the narrow confines of Scowcroftism. To be sure, on military matters he does not have the experience of Sam Nunn or the wonkery of Gary Hart. But he comes from a wing of the party that has resisted the liberal impulse to treat the Defense Department as a way to fund other social programs and to see foreign relations as an area where the recourse to military intervention is regarded as taboo. He also has a vice president with considerable foreign policy credentials. On Bosnia and the Middle East, Clinton's instincts have so far been sound. His foreign policy addresses at the beginning of this campaign reflected a deep understanding of this country's need to remain engaged in Europe and Asia, to refocus our defenses rather than run them down.

Much has been said in this campaign about the question of character. We believe it tells in Clinton's favor. He has shown the character to emerge from a difficult childhood to take advantage of some of the best education the world has to offer; he has shown the ability not merely to package his politics, but to think through the intricacies of policy that support it; in the primaries, he showed dignity and perseverance in the midst of an unconscionable invasion of his privacy; in his public career he has weathered five terms of elective office with a creditable and dogged record of public service. On the most important matter of judgment so far, he picked Al Gore to be his running mate. It was a choice that showed Clinton's ability not only to act freely of the interest group politics of the Democratic Party, but to recognize a man with complementary expertise and intuition, whose mastery of policy detail (especially in the areas of defense and technology) is also married with a steadiness of touch. If Clinton runs his administration as well as he has run this campaign, then we have little to fear about his temperamental ability to bear the burdens of high office.

Of all the sicknesses affecting our politics, the most profound is our inability to be honest. On the deficit, the underclass, race, we have long been engaged in an elaborate ritual of denial. This ritual, intensified by the distraction of the last four years, should stop now. We sense in the public engagement of the last few months that Americans are ready to elect an administration that is finally accountable, that will no longer have the excuse of an opposing Congress to avoid action, that will engage the complicated, practical problems of our country, that will be directly answerable for its failures. Clinton, heaven knows, is not perfect. He has a tendency, as we have noted before, to avoid hard truths. But the choice now is between watching an exhausted president perpetuate four more years of cynicism and keeping an intelligent, committed politician honest. We choose the latter. •

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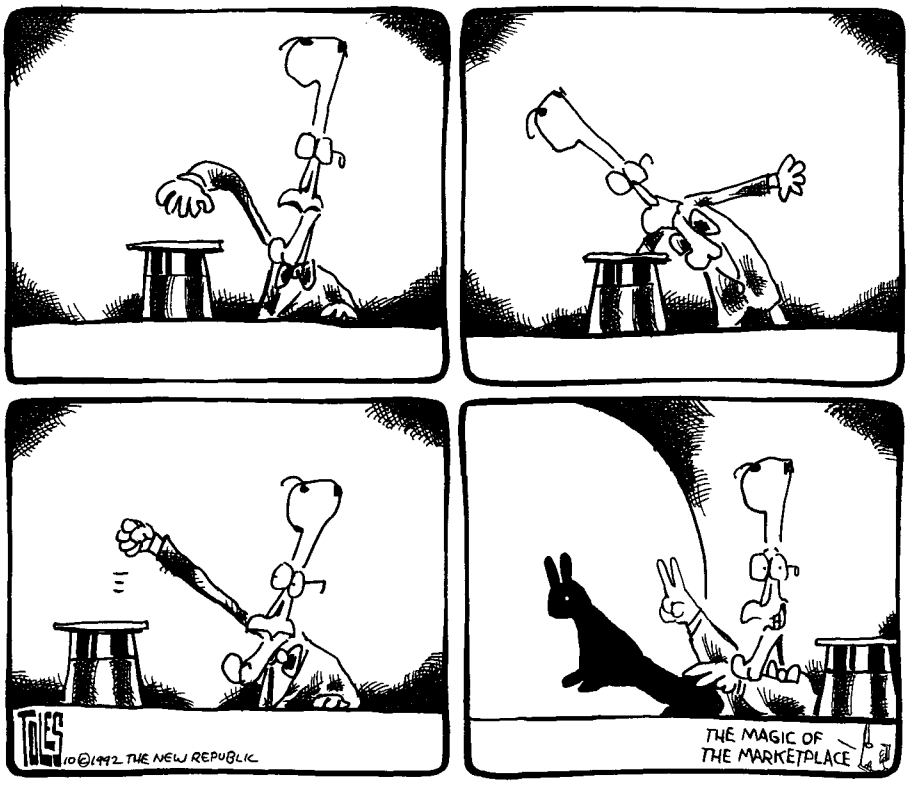
NOTEBOOK

BUSHISM OF THE WEEK: "Yes, we've got problems at home. And I think I got a good plan to help fix those problems at home. But because of our leadership, because we didn't listen to the freeze—the nuclear freeze group, do you remember—freeze it, back in the late '70s—freeze, don't touch it; we're going to lock it in now or else we'll have war." —October 15, in Richmond

(HILLARY) CLINTON SUCK-UP WATCH: "We all need heroes. Hillary Rodham Clinton is one of ours.... We urge you to read these pages and see Hillary Clinton for what she really is. Not a schemer, but a dreamer. Not a radical, but a reformer. Not a conniver, but a concerned citizen." —from the introduction to a pamphlet distributed at the twentieth reunion of Yale Law School's Class of 1972



(BILL) CLINTON SUCK-UP WATCH: See pages 7–9.

THE SIMPSON: Has any moderator of a presidential debate ever exhibited the heavy-handed bias that ABC's Carole Simpson displayed during the second of this year's televised encounters? In her brittle, motherly way, Simpson managed to condescend to both the audience and the candidates. She turned a question about improving the nation's "water system, sewer system, and transportation system" into a query more to her liking—"The cities, who's going to fix the cities?" When nobody in the audience asked a question about "racial tensions and ethnic tensions," she demanded one. When someone asked why candidates don't address the issues, Simpson said, "Who wants to take that one? Mr. Perot, you have an answer for everything, don't you?" When another described high school graduates "who cannot fill out an application," Simpson sneered, "Who would like to begin, the 'education president'?" But Bill Clinton received no such barbs. Instead, Simpson invited him to depart from answering a question and take a shot at Bush on Iraqgate. Clinton, displaying a sense of propriety Simpson lacked, politely declined.

YEAR OF THE VICTIM: Carol Moseley Braun, who has said she entered the Illinois Senate race because of the injustice done to Anita Hill, now seems to be taking her cues from Clarence Thomas. Tarnished in recent weeks by the revelation of a series of ethical lapses, including non-disclosure of a $29,000 gift from her mother and evidence that as Cook County Recorder of Deeds she put city funds in the non-interest-bearing bank account of a political crony, she now says the charges are equivalent to a sexual assault. "I feel like I've been raped by you guys already, O.K., and I just figure this rape has gone on long enough. Quite frankly, for me to continue to lay back and let you guys do this is just asinine," she recently declared to a group of reporters. At least she didn't call it a high-tech lynching.

LOSERS AND WINNERS:
"George Bush won by not losing. Bill Clinton lost by not winning."
—Tom Shales, *The Washington Post*, October 12

"Clinton won because he did not lose. In boxing, the champ keeps the title if the decision is a draw; not so in politics. Bush lost because he did not win."
—William Safire, *The New York Times*, same day
(thanks to Marc Burstein, New York, New York)

ATTENTION LIBRARIANS: The numbering of last week's issue was wrong. It should have read, Volume 207, Number 19, not Volume 207, Number 6. •

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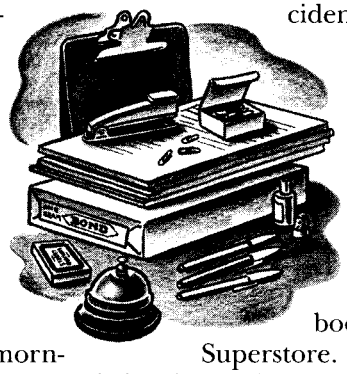
CONSUMED

STAPLES

By David Michaelis

They invite perfection, these spotless yellow pads, these uncapped pens, these immaculate reams of bond. There are no mediocrities here, no deficit, no virus, no waste. There aren't any mistakes—not yet—in this paradise of possibility. There's scarcely a sense of expenditure; cash outlay automatically becomes Office Expense in this tax-deductible Eden. This is the "Office Superstore," a 60,000-square-foot supermarket devoted to office supplies. The aisles are fifty yards long, fifteen feet wide, and I am shopping with a Safeway-sized cart.



Last year I spent $3,274 on office supplies. Self-employed for twelve years (audited only once), I annually claim the allowable deduction for what the IRS labels an "office in the home." The trick to a home office is to make sure things never get too homey.

Once every couple of months comes a morning when the smell of burnt toast lingers around the desk, mingling with the kitty litter. The toilet backs up; the encrusted cereal bowls sit by the sink in the quiet at noon. On that day, the sight of office supplies is the only thing that will clear my head, and in the shank of the afternoon, when men of my father's generation used to slip out of the office and into a seat at the ballpark, I take myself to Staples.

Office supplies cleanse our old ambitions, purge us of our failures, fill the eternal need for another chance to get things right. First cousin of art supplies, distant relation to household hardware, office products excite the same levels of fantasy and delusion as sporting goods, camping equipment, garden tools. Fancy desktop caddies end up by the wastebasket for the same reason rowing machines settle in the garage, four-man alpine tents perch in the attic, and triple-decker mulchers land in the garbage. They aren't about who we are but who we want to be.

Down Aisle 2, just past the clipboards, stop for a moment at *accordion files.* The conceit is that Everything Will Fall Into Place because there is a Place For Everything. What's more, accordion files *expand;* if only you'll start sorting and indexing ("Get Organized! Stay Organized!" nags one manufacturer), order can be plucked from chaos. But look at what's actually going on in Aisle 2—look at the daydreamers who stand by their carts vowing, "*This* year I'm going to keep my receipts in order." Watch them walk past accordion files and buy something impractical, like a receipt spindle ($1.29), or nostalgic, like a Boston pencil sharpener, or ludicrous, like a call bell ($2.98), or inane, like presharpened golf pencils ("Made from real wood").

Far from organizing one's life, the Office Superstore only puts more junk into it. I recently succumbed to a Dashboard Clipboard with suction cup ($3.77). And though I haven't sunk to a fingertip moistener, I did give long looks to a guillotine-sharp fifteen-inch Boston paper trimmer and a 20-FPM Shredex paper shredder called the "Watergate 1200." Its "special features" include a ten-inch "throat" for letter-size documents, or, come to think of it, the last of my super-wide '70s neckties. The Watergate was marked down by $100, and when I asked why, the store's manager shrugged and said Staples hasn't sold many this year. I said I was surprised since, after all, 1992 is the twentieth anniversary of the break-in at the Watergate. The manager didn't think *Watergate* had anything to do with it. "It's just coincidence," he said.

In Aisle 4, meanwhile, the pithy "To Do" and "To Call" pages of the Rolodex Personal Organizer recall Franklinian exhortations to Diligence, Industry, Thrift. And for the missions to Paris, there's the Diplomat, a 500-card Rolodex with Torque-A-Matic Control and Custom Capstan. Nothing recalls so clearly the *Poor Richard's Almanack* world of self-betterment as the books and tapes on sale in today's Office Superstore. You can almost see Pennsylvania Quakers peering out sternly from under tricorn hats: *Believe and Achieve*; *Penny Pinching*; *Blow Your Own Horn*; *You Can If You Think You Can*; *Stop Wasting Your Time!* There are also tips for the too-serious (*Lighten UP*) and guides for salesmen (*The Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun*).

Office supplies are the one place in our culture where conscience and consumerism agree. Where else, except a health-food store, does dropping a couple of hundred bucks feel so uplifting? But a sense of betterment has hidden costs. The most powerful idea in the office supply universe is that you must take charge, must live up to your potential, must, in short, add up to something.

On my desk right now, I have an odd, old photograph—a black-and-white snapshot of my first office supplies. I took the picture one September evening, when I was 7. The next day I was going off to a bigger, more demanding school than the one I had attended the year before, and I must have been scared enough to want to record my euphoria. For the picture, I carefully posed my school supplies on the desktop in my bedroom: a new leather bookbag, several writing tablets, a pencil box leaded with freshly sharpened Mongol No. 2 pencils, a twelve-inch wooden Westcott ruler, a plastic protractor, some paper clips, a bunch of rubber bands. And something more.

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I had built a model that summer, a sloppily glued, slapdash monster—the "Creature of the Black Lagoon." At the last moment, I apparently gave in to temptation and chose to include the Creature in the picture. There it stands on its scaly legs, rearing its serpentine head, disrupting my oasis of order.

It has resurfaced on my desk every September. It used to drive me crazy. Order, I thought, was the natural state of things, the way to get things done, the way to grace. School supplies, after all, are among the ways children learn to take control of their lives. But the Creature, I see now, redeems me. It transforms my school's-eve snapshot into a portrait of an impossible wish: to have the world as I wanted it, in its prelapsarian state, before I had a chance to mess it up. To recapture the moment when everything still seems possible.

DAVID MICHAELIS's most recent novel is *Boy, Girl, Boy, Girl* (Bantam).

Lights out at the White House.

CHARITY CASES

By Jason DeParle

This week the White House named its 928th Point of Light, honoring Mobile AIDS Support Services in Mobile, Alabama. The daily award has become a White House ritual, intended to underscore President Bush's belief that volunteer work is a vital part of American life. But like many virtues, the spirit of voluntarism is easier to admire than to imitate. And nowhere is this clearer than at the White House. Questions about the scarcity of volunteers among the Bushies' top ranks brought a mix of angry denunciations, embarrassed silences, and awkward apologies.

"I was going to get involved, and I just kind of got clobbered on time," said James P. Pinkerton, the former domestic policy aide of New Paradigm fame. Pinkerton, who now works for the Bush campaign, came up with the idea of the Earth Conservation Corps, which puts inner-city kids to work planting trees. But he described his own role as that of a "guiding ideologue, not really doing anything operational." Phone calls to a dozen or so senior Bush aides brought similar responses. Nicholas Calio, the president's liaison to Congress, explained: "I'd like to report [doing] something more than volunteering to take care of my own kids." Anna Perez, spokeswoman for volunteerism advocate Barbara Bush, said that "sloth, fatigue, and guilt" about time away from her family keep her from volunteering. Some staffers became outraged that the question was even raised. "Do I do volunteer work?" asked Mary Matalin, the president's deputy campaign manager. "In the four hours a day I have to myself to sleep, pick up my house, call my father, get my dry cleaning? Politics, if you're doing it right, is a twenty-hour-a-day job."

C. Boyden Gray, the president's attorney, resorted to a legal argument to explain his point-of-light-free existence. He implied that he and other White House employees are forbidden from volunteer work by Executive Order 12674, which, he explained, "admonishes federal employees not to engage in outside activities that would interfere with one's federal responsibilities." When pressed on the question, however, he conceded that the rule does not really ban White House aides from soup kitchens. "There just isn't any time in my job," he said. "You drag yourself to work and drag yourself home." Former White House chief of staff John Sununu apparently does no volunteer work either. Jackie Kennedy, his secretary of ten years, couldn't recall him ever volunteering. "He's never done anything like that," she said. "He did nothing like that in the White House, no community service. Even as governor. No, nothing like that."

Clearly, Gray's absence from the nation's volunteer force does not rank as a national scandal. And some White House staffers, especially at the junior level, do volunteer. Jeffrey Holmstead, an assistant to Gray, spends about twenty hours a week as the pastor of an inner-city Mormon church. Gretchen Pagel, deputy director of the Office of National Service, was a tutor in a homeless shelter for several years. Among senior aides, Henson Moore, who served briefly as deputy chief of staff, often stopped at soup kitchens and put in a few hours' work when traveling on government business as an Energy Department official. But he's a pioneer among the Bushies. Constance Horner, the White House personnel director, believes the real problem with her colleagues' lack of volunteerism isn't hypocrisy, but the class isolation it reinforces. "People who make powerful decisions about American lives ought to know as much as possible about those lives, and volunteer work is a significant way to do that," she explained. But she said she doesn't currently volunteer either. Senior people in the White House, she said, "have to put in twelve-hour days as a matter of routine and raise their families well. And there is just no time or energy left over for many of us. That's a pity."

Among White House staffers, no one is identified with the Points of Light as much as Peggy Noonan, the former speechwriter who coined the phrase and includes a chapter on it in her best-selling memoir. Asked if she is doing any volunteer work, Noonan, now a free-lance writer in New York, became uncharacteristically inarticulate. "I don't know what the answer should be," she said. "This is kind of unfair. Maybe I'm not thinking clearly enough."

JASON DEPARLE is a reporter for *The New York Times.*

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Bushies and the Clintonites.

MUZZLED

By Stephen Rodrick

Joplin, Missouri, is the kind of small town that still gets excited about a visit from George Bush. And supporters of the president weren't the only ones galvanized by the announcement that he would drop by on a September 11 campaign swing. A few dozen Clinton supporters, wearing campaign buttons and holding posters, gathered at Missouri Southern State College where Bush was scheduled to speak. Suddenly four Jasper County police officers rounded up the little band of Clintonites and herded them to a designated "violent protest area" a quarter mile away. County Sheriff Bill Pierce says he was under orders to do so by the Secret Service.

The group was kept under police surveillance behind yellow "Crime Scene—Do Not Cross" tape until Bush left. One Democrat, Patrick Walls, did manage to slip past security in time for Bush's speech. But when he hoisted his Clinton sign amid the sea of Bush-Quayle posters, a Missouri state police officer "escorted" him to a cluster of College Republicans, who promptly confiscated his sign. Walls saw another collegiate conservative walk up to a little girl sitting on her father's shoulders and rip the Clinton sign out of her pudgy fingers.

Walls's experience in Joplin—where Dick Kurtenbach, director of the Missouri-Kansas chapter of the ACLU, says his organization is considering suing the university and local police—is not unusual. Clinton supporters around the country tell similar stories of threats and physical intimidation when they show up at Bush or Quayle rallies.

Of course, keeping the other side's supporters out of sight is the first rule of campaign handlers from both parties. Bush supporters who showed up for Clinton's September 11 speech at Notre Dame were restricted to the cheap seats, beyond T.V. camera range. And Bush's protectors have legitimate safety concerns whenever he speaks before a crowd. But there's a difference in the way each campaign reacts to the other side's supporters. At Clinton rallies, Bush supporters are moved off-camera. At Bush rallies, Clinton supporters, even well-mannered sign wavers, are moved out of the arena.

Jonathan Sweeney, a student at Arizona State University and a Clinton supporter, got a feel for Republican techniques when, on a lark, he rode an ASU College Republicans bus to a September 22 Quayle rally in Phoenix. At any Bush event, the drill is similar: College Republicans, armed with air horns and walkie-talkies, infiltrate the audience and radio their colleagues for reinforcements whenever dissension is spotted. "Once the rally began, the College Republicans began blowing horns into the ears of Clinton supporters who were just standing around, including little kids, and began grabbing signs and pushing people around," Sweeney says.

What's more, the Bush campaign's rally enforcement efforts are regularly bolstered by the president's supposedly apolitical Secret Service detail. The Secret Service has repeatedly denied accusations by Clinton supporters that their officers have selectively confiscated anti-Bush signs and prevented Clinton supporters from attending rallies. But the sheer number of complaints from towns such as Plymouth, Michigan; Enid, Oklahoma; and Branson, Missouri, suggests that Secret Service agents are overstepping their bounds. With their ear pieces, sunglasses, and barely concealed weapons, they are easy to spot and difficult to mistake.

"Either they were Secret Service or people who did a really good job impersonating them," says Irene Piccone, a Northville, Michigan, lawyer who wrote a letter to the *Detroit Free Press* expressing dismay at the Secret Service's confiscation of Clinton-Gore signs and the removal of Clinton supporters at the rally in Plymouth. Piccone was promptly contacted by a Secret Service spokesman, who denied involvement and suggested that Republicans, coincidentally dressed like Secret Service agents, may have been the culprits. "They told me that Secret Service agents are taking the blame for things that the Bush supporters have done all over the country."

But when 61-year-old Ilse Tennis of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, turned to the Secret Service after Bush supporters at a September 30 rally tried to confiscate her "Universal Health Care Now" sign, the Secret Service men sided with the Bushies. "I walked over to these two men with ear pieces and asked them if they were Secret Service and they said yes," Tennis says. "I thought since they were the law and impartial they would support my First Amendment rights. Instead, they told me if I wasn't cooperative they'd have me arrested." Sweeney reports that a Secret Service agent, mistaking him for a Bush fan, even gave him helpful hints on how to blast his air horn in the ears of Clinton supporters. "I was only blowing mine halfheartedly until the agent came over to me and demonstrated how, by tilting it up, you could get full noise," he says.

Recently these tactics have begun to backfire. At some of the rallies, the antics of the horn-blowing Bushies drew more media attention than the speech of their candidate. In Enid, Oklahoma, local papers reported on protesters being shunted to side streets when the presidential motorcade moved through. A Quayle rally in Tulsa on September 2 attracted follow-up coverage when it was reported that a pro-choice female student was slightly injured by high school football players pressed into service by Quayle's advance team to keep protesters from the vice president.

Effective or not, it's not surprising that Bush's han-

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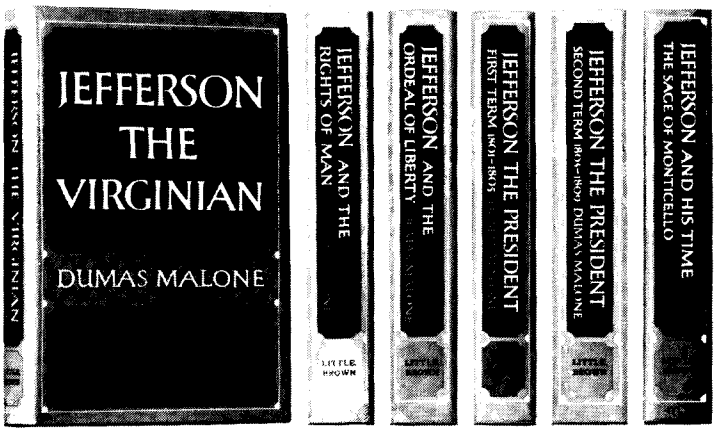

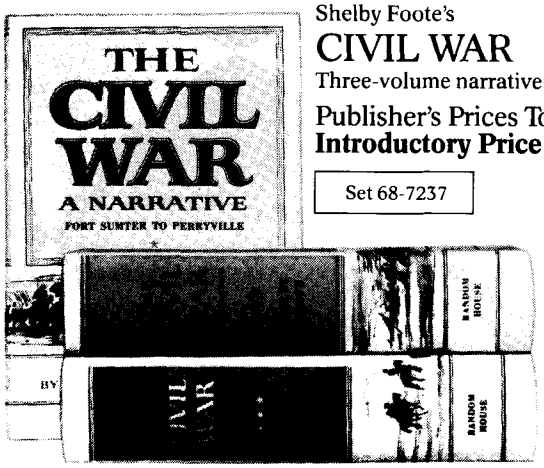

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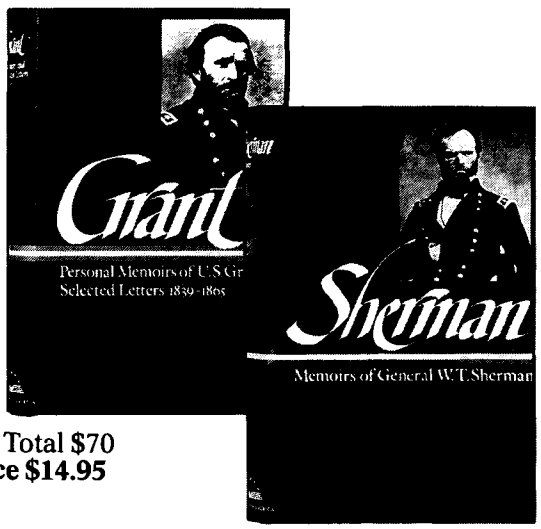

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dlers are so fanatical about keeping Clinton supporters out of the president's line of vision. The president becomes noticeably rattled when confronted by hecklers. On September 27 Bush succumbed to one of his trademark flusters when, dogged by costumed chickens along a Midwest campaign tour, he said to a crowd: "There he is—the chicken. I'm not sure if that chicken is from Oxford, England, or if he's the one that dumps that fecal coliform bacteria into the Arkansas River." And, at an October 16 rally in Edison, New Jersey, Bush spotted a vocal group of college-aged Clinton supporters. "I wish these draft dodgers would shut up so I can finish my speech," he crabbed. It was the only thing Bush said that made the evening news. •

A debate round-up.

WHY AM I HERE?

By Sidney Blumenthal

The making of the Clinton victory preceded the debates. "Debates are to campaigns as treaties are to wars," said Sam Popkin, Clinton's deputy pollster. "They ratify what you've won on the ground." In the months before the contenders confronted each other on stage, Clinton, ever the assiduous student, progressed up the grades of the Electoral College. As early as May a poll showed that in a two-way race with George Bush in California he was definitively ahead. Though Ross Perot was about to inflate into a gigantic (combustible) dirigible, filling the vacuum of Clinton's and Bush's negatives, it was clear that Clinton had a wider potential base than Democratic candidates in the past. The states that had gone for Michael Dukakis, plus at least California, were lying beyond the mist and fog.

By the conclusion of the Democratic convention, the party's constituencies were locked in more tightly than at any time since 1964. Single white men, who had been the single worst category for the Democrats, were now among the strongest. Of course, the economy was a factor in the shift. But the chemistry of the Clinton-Gore generational ticket had also catalyzed it. And Illinois, which Dukakis had only narrowly lost, had moved firmly into Clinton's column.

Then came the Republican convention, perhaps the most beneficial event for the Democratic Party in two decades. In reaction to the "Kulturkampf" of Houston, all the New England states, including New Hampshire, threw themselves into Clinton's camp. His margins in Maine and Vermont, two normally Republican states, approached 25 points—beyond the 20-point margins in New York and California. Connecticut, also usually Republican, was near 20 points. Pennsylvania became a Clinton state, with the margin near that of Illinois—about 20. Clinton was also ahead in Colorado by 5 to 10 points. Catholics were now for Clinton by a 25-point margin.

For Bush to win he had to sweep everything else on the map. But his speech finally unveiling his economic program set off a perverse chain reaction. By calling attention to his inattention, he referred voters to his hollowness. A whole new layer of the disaffected peeled off. By late September New Jersey and Michigan ha[illegible] blown for Clinton, and Georgia and North Carolina too were creeping into double-digit margins.

In fact, Bush's problem was insoluble. Despite generous reviews from the press, his acceptance speech had hurt him. So had his economic speech. Whenever he appeared for any prolonged period in the public's eye, his rating fell. Moreover, Jack Nelson of the *Los Angeles Times* discovered that whenever Bush campaigned in a state, his numbers there declined. The president, who had no coherent strategy, was becoming an anathema. His best gambit might have been invisibility.

Instead, Bush attacked Clinton's patriotism. The tactic of red-baiting him for a 1969 student trip to Moscow, which Bush sustained for three days before suddenly dropping it, utterly backfired. Until that moment, the margin in the popular vote had hovered in the 10- to 14-point range. Now, within seventy-two hours, Bush lost 10 points in his favorability rating and dropped 6 more behind Clinton. In a meeting of Clinton's advisers, Bob Squier, Al Gore's media consultant, proposed that the Clinton campaign buy five minutes on every network the night before the election for George Bush to appear.

The panicky Bush threw himself into the hands of James Baker, who assumed the guise that Bush ought to have: the invisible man. Initially Baker believed that stonewalling debates would allow Bush to make the contest more fluid. Baker's reasoning on debates has always been that setting a date freezes the campaign until the event. But stonewalling did not move Bush's numbers. So, under intense criticism, Baker called for a debate a week—a formula for keeping the campaign in flux. At last he approved a compromise on formats that would almost inevitably undermine Bush: Perot was bound to wear thin; Clinton was bound to do well, at least once; and Bush, alas, had to appear.

In the first debate, Bush unleashed his "character" attack on Clinton, which Clinton blunted by citing Bush's father, Senator Prescott Bush: "Your father was right to stand up to Joe McCarthy; you were wrong to attack my patriotism." When Clinton mentioned the name "Prescott Bush," George Bush emitted an involuntary grunt as though he felt the wound deep within. Perot, the carny barker, tied Bush to a spinning wheel and tossed knives at him, rarely missing his target. In the polls, Bush finished third.

In the vice presidential debate, Dan Quayle yipped

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and yapped, trying to appeal to the pit-bull Republicans. His ninety minutes of unceasing barking was his first performance in the 1996 GOP campaign. Gore was simply his foil for the real battle against Jack Kemp, Phil Gramm, and whomever else. Gore's smooth responses were almost irrelevant. The key was James Stockdale, the existential man, a former prisoner of war recruited to stand in for Perot's eventual running mate. Unfortunately, that entity never turned up, so once again, as Perot's hostage, Stockdale served his country. By displaying his unfitness, he performed a higher duty. The slight fluidity that Perot had introduced into the race during the first debate was drained by his worthy No. 2.

In the second presidential debate, Bush attempted to renew the snarling, but was halted by a citizen-interlocutor, who admonished him for not sticking to the issues. Bush retreated, humbled. Three times he glanced at his watch, perhaps trying to gauge his plan but conveying his distraction. Perot, meanwhile, became a feedback loop of worn aphorisms: "Do you want to fix the problem or sound-bite it?" And Clinton, in the format of his choice, walked in and out of the crowd throughout the call and response. Bush made his closing statement from behind his chair. In the polls, he finished third.

In the third debate, Bush again mounted the attack on Clinton, without pesky voters around to scold him. But he mixed his rehearsed nastiness with a more authentic and beguiling daffiness. Asked about the representation of women in his inner circle, he praised his deputy assistant, Rose Zamaria (who makes no policy), for being "about as tough as a boot." Then he added: "Jim Baker's a man. Yeah, I plead guilty to that." And he spoke of having "90-90 hindsight." Clinton kept things steady, parrying Bush's attacks. And Perot once again tossed knives, including the stiletto engraved "Iraqgate." In the polls, Bush finished third.

For the Republicans, the only imperative is self-preservation. In New York, Senator Alfonse D'Amato declared that on issue after issue, he "agrees" with Clinton. Three GOP congressional candidates in Pennsylvania publicly disavowed Bush. In New Jersey, another Republican candidate laughed derisively when asked about Bush's political coattails. In California, Governor Pete Wilson, Bush's state chairman, declined to campaign for him. "I am closer to Bill Clinton," announced the fading Republican Senator Bob Kasten of Wisconsin. In Oregon, Senator Bob Packwood was challenged in a debate by his Democratic opponent to say whether he would vote for Bush. He did not answer. And Bush national co-chair Vin Weber traveled to California, explaining, "I'm campaigning for candidates who can win." Social Darwinism has come to the Republican Party.

What Bush has left is $20 million for negative commercials. The question remaining is whether he will exceed Barry Goldwater's 38 points, or perhaps Herbert Hoover's 41. Bush needn't check his watch anymore. He has a reservation on a flight leaving Washington in the late morning of January 20, 1993. •

An Iraqgate primer.

BNL HELL

By Alan Friedman

It can take a very long time for the press and the public to understand the contours of a national political scandal. This appears to be the case in the unfolding story of "Iraqgate." Coming in the closing stages of a presidential campaign that is focused on the economy rather than on foreign policy, the complex scandal failed to ignite as a major issue until only a few weeks ago.

The origins of Iraqgate can be found in the way the Reagan administration's tilt toward Saddam Hussein increased after George Bush took over the White House in 1989. Apologists for the Bush administration are eager to dismiss this as a "failed policy," but it was far more than a policy misstep. It may yet be shown that some of the covert assistance provided to Iraq was illegal. And the evidence suggests there was a cover-up as well that almost certainly broke the law.

Although many aspects of the Iraqgate story have emerged over the past three years, the American media, with the prominent exceptions of William Safire and Ted Koppel, have remained largely unmoved until very recently. Current interest has been aroused by an unusual public spat between the CIA and the Department of Justice about which agency applied greater pressure on the other to withhold classified documents from the office of the federal prosecutor in Atlanta. The documents would have been vital as the prosecutors probed the criminal case involving $5 billion of illegal loans made to Saddam by the Atlanta branch of Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL), Italy's government-owned and biggest bank. According to a trail of government documents, it appears that more than $2 billion of the Atlanta loans—made between 1985 and 1989—helped to finance Saddam's nuclear and chemical weapons, cluster bombs, SCUD missiles, and ballistic missile projects.

There is strong circumstantial evidence that the White House knew far more about the BNL loans than it has admitted. By September 1989 various U.S. investigators had already reported the likelihood that BNL money had helped finance Iraq's nuclear-capable Condor 2 missile project. But in October 1989 Secretary of State Jim Baker seemed content to accept the bland assurances of Iraq's innocence in the BNL affair during a personal meeting with Tariq Aziz, Saddam's foreign minister. What followed next was extraordinary. Despite the mounting evidence of Iraq's abuse of both BNL loans and U.S. loan guarantees, $1 billion more in guarantees for Baghdad was

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approved in a November 1989 White House meeting.

Last year *The Financial Times* and "Nightline" obtained the classified minutes of that meeting. They revealed that the State Department pushed through the guarantees after Baker aide Robert Kimmitt said it would be "contrary to the president's intentions" to halt them. "We knew the BNL thing was stinking, and there had certainly been enough yellow flags to cause us to stop," a senior participant in the White House meeting told me last year. "But the president wanted Saddam to have the guarantees for grain exports, and he felt Iraq could be a source for stability in the region." All of this, and more, was published and broadcast nearly eighteen months ago and caused barely a ripple.

In mid-September the U.S. District Court in Atlanta began hearings to determine a jail sentence for Christopher Drogoul, the former BNL Atlanta manager. After the hearings started, the central premise of the government's case—that Drogoul single-handedly masterminded $5 billion of illegal loans to Iraq without the knowledge of his superiors in Rome—imploded when Drogoul's lawyer presented evidence that Rome knew of the loan. Drogoul was allowed by the judge to withdraw a last-minute plea bargain that he had accepted in order to conclude the case. (A trial is now scheduled for next year.) Marvin Shoob, the fiercely independent judge presiding over the Atlanta hearings, said in court that CIA documents that only he had seen definitely proved Rome's involvement.

Then internal BNL documents were presented in court that showed an extraordinary effort by Italy's ambassador in Washington to lobby senior Bush administration officials, including then Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, to ensure that BNL and the Italian government were portrayed as innocent victims of a sophisticated international financial and military conspiracy run by Drogoul. In the wake of these revelations the Justice Department released a CIA letter—in response to a request by the Atlanta prosecutor—dated September 17, 1992, that claimed the only data the CIA had obtained regarding Rome's knowledge of the loans came from "publicly available information." This was an absurdity. Only a few days earlier Representative Henry Gonzalez, who as chairman of the House Banking Committee was investigating the BNL affair, had released portions of another CIA report in which the agency said it had independently confirmed Rome's involvement. Soon after this contradiction came to light, Senator David Boren of the Senate Intelligence Committee learned in closed hearings that the CIA and the Justice Department had deliberately concealed evidence of Rome's knowledge from the Atlanta prosecutors.

Boren's discovery set off the brawl between the CIA and the Justice Department. Already smarting from congressional pressure to appoint a special prosecutor to get to the bottom of BNL and Iraqgate, Attorney General William Barr called on the FBI to investigate possible wrongdoing by the CIA and Justice. When this was followed by a Justice Department leak of a two-month-old ethics probe of the FBI director, it raised the suspicions of Boren and others that Justice was pressuring the FBI to go easy on the investigation, and the Iraqgate scandal was finally given the attention it deserved. Despite mounting demands from both the Senate and the House Judiciary committees, however, Barr still refuses to name a special prosecutor. Instead he has asked a retired judge from New Jersey to help him investigate as his own personal "independent counsel."

One question is who was guilty of concealing CIA reports from prosecutors. But the heart of this scandal is why the CIA material was withheld in the first place and what else might still be covered up.

Judge Shoob offered a clue about what is yet to come when he wrote in an extraordinarily bold ruling from the bench that "it is apparent that decisions were made at the top levels of the United States Justice Department, State Department, Agriculture Department, and within the intelligence community to shape this case, and that information may have been withheld from local prosecutors seeking to investigate the case or used to steer the prosecution." This hints at obstruction of justice by officials of the executive branch. That is a serious charge, but each new revelation points in this direction. For example, an April 1990 memo written by a Federal Reserve Bank investigator to Gerald Corrigan, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, discusses complaints of "interference from the Justice Department in Washington." In 1989 Jay Bybee, a lawyer in the White House office of C. Boyden Gray, the president's counsel, called the Atlanta prosecutor to express concern about the "embarrassment level" of the BNL affair. Other documents show how the Justice Department inexplicably canceled an essential trip to Italy by the Atlanta investigators. And it doesn't help the administration's case that the U.S. Attorney named in 1990 by the administration had to recuse himself from the BNL investigation because it turned out he had previously worked on behalf of Matrix Churchill, the Iraqi-owned company identified by the administration as a BNL-funded linchpin in Saddam's arms procurement network.

House and Senate BNL investigators say obstruction of justice may be only one of a series of possible crimes committed in the BNL imbroglio by high-ranking officials of the Bush administration. In calling for a special prosecutor, the House Judiciary Committee last summer listed several others, including perjury, financial conflict of interest by senior officials of the executive branch, and falsification of documents. Criminal indictments may ultimately be brought against members of the Cabinet.

The darkest and still unproven charge made by some Iraqgate investigators in Congress is that the Bush administration not only interfered with or failed to pursue the BNL case sufficiently, but also that it either knew about the illegal loans and turned a blind eye or was in some manner itself involved in the whole business. The only government document that hints at this is a July 1990 memo from Rimantas Rukstele, a prosecutor in Atlanta who asked Washington for a briefing in case it transpired that the CIA was itself involved in the BNL loans affair. The prosecutor did not get his briefing, and the CIA has of course denied any such involvement.

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If, however, the Reagan or Bush administration knowingly allowed BNL Atlanta to fund Saddam's unconventional weapons projects, partly with U.S.-guaranteed Iraqi loans that are now in default and being paid for by the American taxpayer, then a significant rewriting of the history of U.S. policy in the 1980s would be in order. It has already been shown that some of the weapons used by Iraq against U.S. forces, including anti-aircraft equipment, came from the United States. Half a million Americans were sent to fight a war Bush said was necessary not merely to preserve Kuwaiti democracy, but to stop Saddam from completing his nuclear missile project. Was it a project we helped him begin? If Bush's attorney general won't name a special prosecutor, it may soon be up to the Clinton administration to do the right thing.

ALAN FRIEDMAN is New York correspondent for *The Financial Times* of London.

Madonna's next move.

AFTER SEX

By Mark Stevens

Madonna is one of the brightest spots in our gloomy American economy. She markets celebrity with great success, selling versions of herself as resourcefully as Detroit once sold cars. Her current model—the book called *Sex*—will help her retain market share. Still, she can't work variations on "My, aren't I a naughty girl" forever. To remain a major player, she must rethink her product line, concerning which I have a modest proposal.

Madonna and child.

The potential is unlimited, if only Madonna can avoid the short-term thinking that has proved so damaging to the rest of American industry. She will, I hope, establish long-term goals that will help her business prosper into the next century. Toward that end, here is some free advice.

The Father. A problem that, with imagination, can be turned to her advantage. First off, she must face the undeniable fact that there is simply no man big enough for her—except you-know-who upstairs, and he probably feels too old. Ideally, Madonna would fertilize herself, the way certain narcissistic flowers do. Or she might bite off the head of a beach boy after copulation. In any case, she must keep the paternity a tantalizing mystery. It wouldn't hurt, I think, to hint that the father was a noble black man.

The Child. It must be an adorable little boy. A girl simply does not bring the same strength to the ticket. The big-bucks archetype is madonna and *son.* She would use ultrasound to test for gender, then just keep on trying until she scores a boy on the screen. Naming the child could cause a problem. Jesus is probably too obvious.

The Pregnancy. Demi Moore showed the way. Her before-and-after pregnancy covers for *Vanity Fair* established a market that Madonna can now triumphantly capture. Magazine editors will approach on bended knee. To avoid merely copying Demi Moore, Madonna should play it for class and tell her photographers to study Renaissance painting. In Italy, for example, there is a painting of a pregnant woman by Piero del[illegible] Francesca that she could mimic. A girl wise before her time, at once sad and innocent. Breaks your heart.

Madonna and Child. Without question, this would be the most talked-about cover in magazine history. Imagine Madonna nursing her chubby cherub while they're both *naked.* Imaging revealing some of the divine *milk.* Love, innocence, and the higher health. Some people will think me crude, but this will also be the first *penis* to appear on the cover of a national magazine. That's history. It should therefore be a really good penis. A divine little petey.

The Controversy. People will complain. Terrific. Bold new ideas always attract criticism. There will be conservatives cranking out their usual end-of-civilization spiel and liberals wringing their hands about whether or not Madonna is raising a designer child. Remember, you can't buy better advertising. *Count* on the criticism. *Bank* it.

The Growing Boy. With careful preparation, momentum can be maintained over the years. The child should be raised from birth as a celebrity, the way kings were brought up to be kings. Let him play around photographers from an early age. (Keep some in the yard.) That way he will instinctively know how to rule the camera. Teach him to read from magazines that smell of perfume. After a while, make a well-publicized point of limiting access to him, which will guarantee at least one cover a year.

The Teen Idol. At the age of 12, he can begin to date 11- and 12-year-old sylphs. He should cultivate an otherworldly, unattainable aura: that *je ne sais quoi* religiosity of the golden boy on the verge of manhood. Bruce Weber will swoon. At a certain point, he should catch a blameless disease, so that the entire nation worries over him, and then recover.

The Progress Toward Marriage. There need be nothing new or creative about this phase. The royals provide the obvious model of a diddle here, a daddle there. In fact, this period may seem somewhat boring to the publi[illegible] sort of vulgar and déja vù, which makes it the perfect setup for what's coming.

The Marriage Made in Heaven. Prepare to be surprised. Prepare to think big. The *son* must marry the *mother.* Before you object, remember how far things have already come in the last twenty years. Anyway, incest would not be the main point. (Incest may be hot right now, but can we count on it being hot in 2010?) The point is *true love.* The highest love, the deepest love, a

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mother's love. Imagine the wedding.

Madonna and her son would bring their passionate message—the greatest love story ever told—to the people in countless guises. The people would heed their message, buying magazines, CDs, and videos to a degree heretofore unknown.

Eternity. By 2015 Madonna and her son will be bigger than anything we can conceive of today. They should then make an "imaginative leap" to the higher bigness. This is what I propose: Madonna must buy the Catholic Church.

Of course, the pope will play hard to get. But what choice does he really have? The Church is desperately poor. Madonna and her son could lay down a trillion in cash. Most people will eventually rally to the idea. Isn't she the most exciting thing to happen to Catholicism since God knows when? Anyway, she already has their souls. Why not their Church? The angels will party until the end of time. •

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

VIRUS

By Robert Bazell

The notion that a new virus causing an AIDS-like illness threatens the world has now been thoroughly debunked, most recently at a World Health Organization meeting in Geneva. But the fear of that possible new infection dominated the international AIDS conference in Amsterdam in July. Dr. Jeffrey Laurence of Cornell Medical Center almost certainly orchestrated the hoopla with a perfectly timed leak to *Newsweek.* Laurence believed (wrongly) in the weeks before the conference that he had discovered such a virus. Hours after the conference became obsessed with the possibility of a "new AIDS," Dr. Sadir Gupta of the University of California, Irvine, announced that he had found his own virus that might be responsible.

Not reported at the time were the patent applications that both Laurence and Gupta had filed through their universities to cover their viruses. Few people also knew that principals of Immusol, a tiny biotechnology start-up company near Gupta's lab in Irvine, were bragging that they had attracted more than $1 million in venture capital on the prospect that Immusol could develop commercial tests for the "new" virus. If there were such a virus, patents and licensing agreements for tests would quickly generate hundreds of millions of dollars of income, as they have for HIV 1 and 2, the viruses known to cause AIDS. Both Gupta and Laurence say they have no financial involvement with Immusol, although the company's president, Tsvi Goldenberg, told the trade journal *Biotechnology Newswatch* that Gupta was "working with the company," and he told me that Immusol had "been in touch" with Laurence.

In the modern world of biomedical science, profit considerations can drive events as forcefully as concerns for the public health. As the field has evolved rapidly from the quest solely for knowledge to the dual pursuits of knowledge and products, the fundamental nature of the enterprise has changed. Not only have many scientists earned millions overnight, some now face potential financial conflicts that would embarrass an inside trader. Often researchers who speak as objective experts stand to profit handsomely from the opinions they utter.

Though scientists often grumble about the lack of federal funds for research, times are flush for many at the lab bench. Stock prices of most biotechnology companies crashed this year from their record highs of 1991 and early '92, but the run-up of those stocks allowed many start-up companies to consummate their initial public offerings of stock. Profits from those IPOs stuffed the coffers of venture capitalists, who are now roaming the halls of labs and scientific meetings searching for new financial alliances that could profit them and the chosen scientists.

Even before this latest gold rush, a large percentage of biomedical scientists had become involved in commercial alliances. Dr. Sheldon Krimsky of Tufts University, who studies the academic-commercial axis of biomedical research, found that in 1988, 37 percent of the biomedical scientists who were members of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences had formal commercial alliances, many with several firms. But Krimsky and others say that his study underestimated the numbers; the true figure probably exceeded 50 percent, and nowadays it is certainly higher still. (Exact numbers are hard to come by: few scientists are forced to disclose their commercial affiliations publicly, if at all.) Indeed, scientists say it is quite common now to attend meetings where every researcher present enjoys a commercial affiliation related to the matter under discussion.

Relations between a scientist and a biotech or pharmaceutical company might consist of nothing beyond hourly consulting fees. But in the typical case a senior scientist functions in two places at once. He carries out research at his university lab assisted by a cadre of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, all of which is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. He also works in a biotech company that he's established with venture capitalists. In exchange for starting the company, the scientist usually gets stock that remains worthless until the company goes public. In the ideal situation, the scientist makes a discovery that could become a drug, a diagnostic kit, or some other product at his university laboratory bench. He and the university patent it together. Then the university decides that the scientist's company should develop the idea into a product, and it licenses the patent to the scientist's company.

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If everything works out, the university and the scientist share patent payments, and if the stock goes public, the scientist and his venture capitalist partners get rich.

But sometimes even this idealized arrangement raises ethical questions. In some instances, where scientists work both at the taxpayers' expense and for a company, they may claim that their ideas were formed solely during their time at the company. One notorious recent example involved the Stanford scientist Dr. Irving Weissman, who earned more than $20 million when Sandoz Pharmaceuticals purchased his company SyStemix, which had patents for isolating certain key white blood cells. Weissman insists he formed many of the ideas that made SyStemix so valuable only during his time at the company, although Stanford's rules say he can spend no more than 20 percent of his time outside the university.

Regulations governing possible conflicts vary enormously among universities, among scientific journals, and even among federal agencies. One big obstacle to reform is that many individuals and institutions vigorously encourage commercial ventures—so-called technology transfer. The idea is that commercial affiliations accelerate the journey of research results from the test tube to the patient's bedside. Patent royalties provide significant income for many universities, and biotechnology companies offer employment for Ph.D.s who might have difficulty finding research jobs in academia.

In addition, biotechnology, which largely comprises the use of genetics to make new drugs and other products, remains an area that the United States clearly dominates. But such noble outcomes neither justify conflicts nor negate the need for rules to prevent them.

Most senior scientists can cite instances (albeit rare) in which they believe their colleagues' actions were motivated largely, if not entirely, by commercial considerations. Often it takes a scandal to bring change. Harvard invoked some of the toughest anti-conflict rules after Scheffer Tseng, a researcher at one of its teaching hospitals, unloaded hundreds of millions of shares of stock in a company called Spectral Pharmaceutical Services before revealing that the company's sole product, an eye medication, was worthless.

But the conflict of interest is seldom so nefarious or obvious. One area of concern is scientific publications. Typically journals send a paper to two or more other scientists in a field for review. Publications don't just advance scientific careers. At the right moment they can greatly enhance the value of a biotechnology company. Until recently, few journals asked either the authors or the reviewers about potential conflicts. But several months ago *Science* published an article citing instances where writers and reviewers favorably described companies in which they held millions of dollars of equity. In that issue the editor, Daniel Koshland, announced that henceforth authors and reviewers should notify him confidentially of any possible conflicts. He would then decide whether the person involved should be disqualified or the possible conflict made public, with the scientist's permission.

But an ethics czar quietly guarding a journal is not enough. Much of what matters to the public, the sponsors, and the beneficiaries of most scientific research is not just what appears in journals but how it is interpreted and trumpeted. Often one scientist claims that a certain laboratory finding could lead to new treatments for some disease. Others disagree. Ultimately the scientific process will reveal the truth. In the meantime, however, the perception about the value of the research finding not only plays on the hopes of those with the disease and their families; it can affect stock prices as well.

One means of eliminating conflicts would be to force scientists to divest themselves of commercial holdings. That seems unfair, and would almost certainly retard progress. The other alternative: full public disclosure so that every other scientist as well as journalists and members of the public could weigh potential conflicts. Many scientists argue that such disclosure is unnecessary and holds them to a higher standard than many other professions. But that is precisely the point. The objectivity of science has long been one of the great resources of our society. Regulations are urgently needed to be certain that this objectivity is not tarnished by the vast new commercialization.

ROBERT BAZELL is the science correspondent for NBC News.

Europe's cartographic nightmare.

MAPORAMA

By Anna Husarska

"Stands Scotland where it did?" asks Macduff in *Macbeth*. Today no cartographer would venture a reply without first checking the morning newspaper, for these are unsure and treacherous times for mapmakers.

Although the current map mess started with the unification of the two Germanys, the main burden of guilt falls on the usual suspect, the Russkies. When Edward Antczak of Northern Cartographic in Vermont decided to produce a map of Moscow, his first idea was to use a Russian one as a starting point. But as he quickly discovered, Soviet maps were purposely imprecise or false to fool the enemy. "The representation of the streets was cartoonish, the directions were kind of wacky, and the buildings did not seem to sit in place," Antczak says indignantly. No doubt it was on the orders of the KGB that streets led directly into rivers, because some

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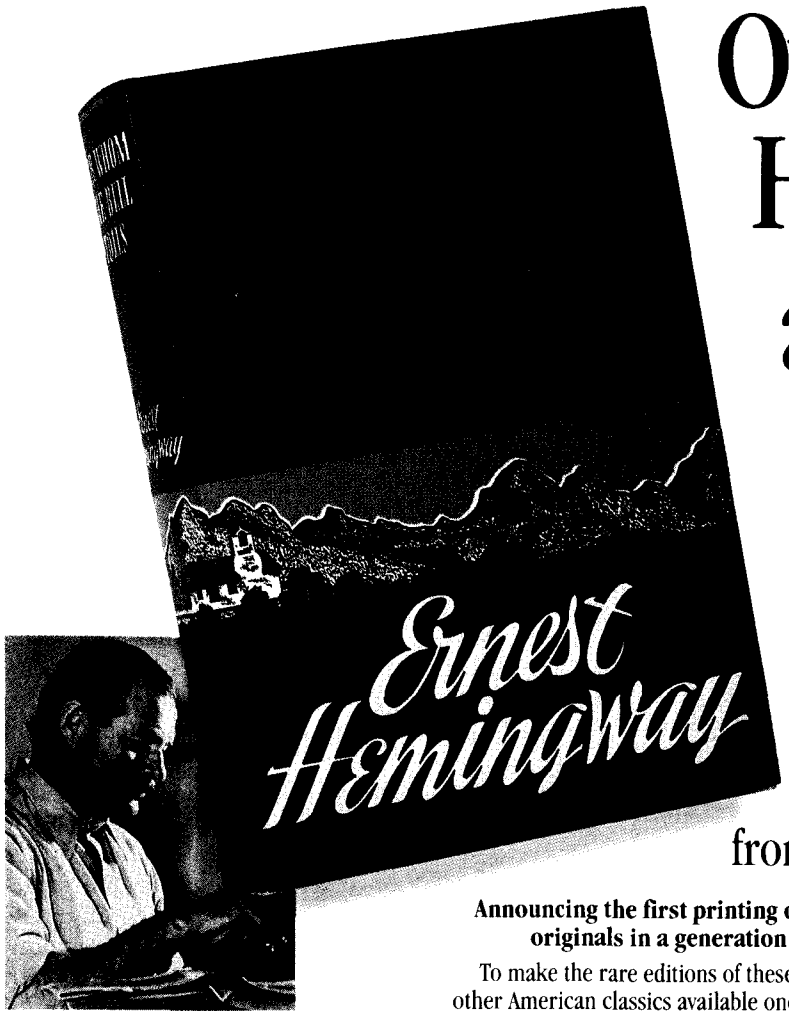

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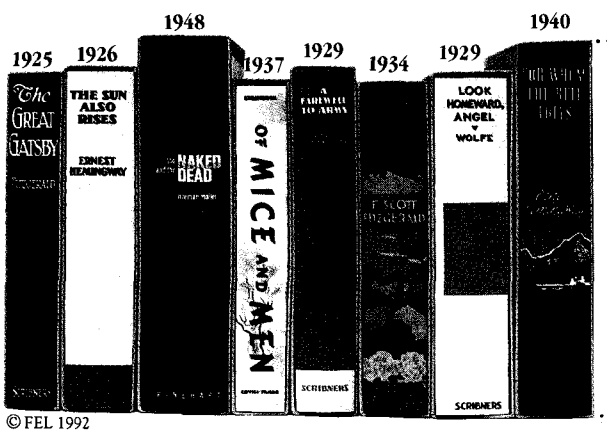

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bridges—strategic targets—could not be drawn. (Similarly, telephone books were impossible to get until recently, lest some spy discover a precious phone number.) Antczak finally worked from a CIA-produced map. Directions made perfect sense, but names didn't.

Whether it is from a plan of the Moscow subway, a map of St. Petersburg, or a road atlas of the former USSR, the list of abandoned place names reads like a pantheon of communism. Gone are the towns named after first secretaries of the Communist Party, rivers praising heroes of the October Revolution, and metro stops honoring the founder of the KGB, Felix Dzherzinsky, and lesser thugs. Mount Stalin in Tajikistan was renamed Mt. Kommunizm (now, that's a change!), though in the data base of the quasi-governmental U.S. Board on Geographical Names there are still eighty places glorifying Stalin. Sergei Kirov, friend and then victim of Stalin, was particularly hard hit by the winds of history. His street in Moscow reverted to its former name, Miesnickaya, which means "of the meat" (apparently seen by the Soviets as a provocative reminder of a crucial scarcity); his metro stop is once more called Chistyje Prudy, or "clean ponds"; his town in Russia has gone back to its maiden name, Vyatka; only the ballet and opera house are still known as "The Kirov."

As a result of this new Russian revolution, my friend Misha Khazin changed his address three times in the last year without moving from the crammed apartment where he works as a translator. His street, called "of the Vasilyev Brothers"—named after two cinema directors who produced hagiographies of the Red Army—reverted to the original name Malaya Posadska ("small area"). Then Misha's hometown reclaimed its original name, St. Petersburg. Finally, it turned out that he was living simply in Russia, not the USSR. Even his own name—or rather, title—underwent a small change: on official mail to Misha (telephone bills, newspaper subscriptions, etc.) the "Tov." for *Tovarishch*, or "Comrade," was dropped, although the bourgeois-sounding *Gospodin*, or "Mister," is not "in" yet.

All the countries of the former Soviet bloc have to run the same "find-restore" software for old names: Albania renamed the town of Stalin as Kucove; Germany rebaptized Karl-Marx-Stadt as Chemnitz; the Hungarian town of Leninvaros went back to Tiszaujvaros; Czechoslovakia shed Gottwaldov for Zlin; and the capital of Montenegro (part of new Yugoslavia) known as Titograd is again called Podgorica.

Dick Randall, the executive secretary of the Board on Geographic Names, says that the current rate of border shuffling and name changes makes his job extremely hectic. He remembers with some nostalgia the lackadaisical time when, with another member of the board, he used to compose the geographer's preferred poetic form: limericks. Now they're always busy updating the board's information bulletin, which carries laconic entries like the one on the line corresponding to USSR: "no longer exists."

The Office of the Geographer at the State Department has to work at breakneck pace, too. Chief cartographer Brad Thomas explained that the office makes sure the geographical names and the representation of international boundaries conform to U.S. foreign policy and vice versa (a sort of watchdog for G.C., geographical correctness). One of the office's employees is continuously scaling the stepladder in the Congressional Hearing Room to repaint and airbrush the wall map, marking the new borders and names.

The upheavals plaguing the cartographic industry provoked an unplanned obsolescence: atlases and even maps are now less like reference books and more like periodicals. The Office of the Geographer has produced its map of ethnic distribution in what used to be Yugoslavia titled "Yugoslav Republics, March 10, 1992." The National Geographic Society promises all buyers of the sixth edition of its World Atlas that "updates summarizing major political developments worldwide" will be mailed to them at no cost. In November the revised sixth edition will come out, and John F. Shupe, the chief cartographer, hopes that it will remain valid for a while. Producing a new map of the world every month is a costly enterprise (a last-minute futzing with the previous edition to get a unified Germany on just one of the plates cost the Society $100,000). Rand McNally, the largest commercial mapmaker in the United States, also produces periodical updates of maps, but strangely does not give the dates of those updates.

This is nothing new. I heard that a similar updating procedure was used by the publishers of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia. With every purge or change of policy, some leaders or heroes were falling into disfavor, so subscribers of the encyclopedia were sent little patches of blank paper and asked to glue them over the entry corresponding to the falling stars. A sort of "do-it-yourself airbrushing." •

Divorce and the election.

TRUST FUND

By Richard Weissbourd

We've been hearing even more than usual this year about voter disgust. First voters had qualms about Bill Clinton's credibility. Then they felt betrayed by Ross Perot. Then they got angry at George Bush. If Clinton wins the presidency, as appears likely, it will say more about the voters' unhappiness with the incumbent's performance than about their hopes for his successor. The recession, congressional gridlock, and a string of government scandals from Watergate to the S&L crisis to Iraqgate are regularly trotted out as causes of this escalating anti-government

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sentiment. But I have an additional explanation, and it springs from the recesses of the voters' pasts, not those of the candidates: divorce. Many people who as children lived through their parents' divorces, or who were born to single mothers, are predisposed to distrust.

This is not as outlandish as it may sound. True, I'm a psychologist and I tend to look for these things. But in analyzing data compiled by the National Opinion Research Center's General Social Survey, I found that adults who as children suffered the divorce of their parents are significantly less likely to say that "people can be trusted," and significantly more likely to say that "other people will try to take advantage of [them]" and that other people are "just looking out for themselves." The data also suggest that these adults are more likely to distrust politicians than are adults who were raised in intact families. These findings hold true across race and class lines.

Of course, survey data have their limits, and this election has already attracted too much strained psychological theorizing. A recent editorial in the *Chicago Tribune* argued that Bill Clinton kept Hillary and Al Gore constantly at his side because Bill had lost his father and needed them to experience a whole sense of self. I don't think so. On the other hand, it doesn't take a great psychological stretch to recognize that a divorce often creates cynicism about authority figures in general, and politicians in particular. Parents, after all, are the first government in a child's life, and adults' attitudes toward authority figures, and presidents especially, are invariably shaped by their childhood experiences with their own parents.

During the last three decades more and more children have suffered a divorce before reaching voting age. Between 1950 and 1982 divorce rates *tripled.* The chance of a marriage ending in divorce is now one in two. It's not just divorce per se that chills trust; it's the aftermath. Millions of children are abandoned by their fathers after a divorce. In some 90 percent of divorces, mothers are awarded custody of their children, who then tend to have little or no contact with their fathers. Ten years after a divorce fathers will be entirely absent from the lives of almost two-thirds of these children. True, 75 percent of divorced mothers remarry, but remarriage typically does not repair this father loss, in part because divorces in second marriages occur both more rapidly and more frequently than divorces in first marriages. Millions of American children are also born to single women and are abandoned by their fathers from birth: of the 15 million children who live with one parent, almost 5 million were born to unwed mothers.

To be sure, you don't have to be born to a single mother or suffer your parents' divorce to distrust politicians. And clearly not all children who experience divorces or are born to single parents lack trust. Yet children of divorced parents may as adults protect themselves by looking for signs of untrustworthiness, seizing on certain character defects in politicians. Infidelity, for example, troubles the vast majority of voters. "If Hillary can't trust him," reads a Republican convention button, "how can we?" Such demonstrations of untrustworthiness have particular resonance for adults who felt betrayed by their parents as children. Infidelity doesn't create a suspicion in these voters so much as it confirms one. Affairs also figure directly in many divorces, and children may strongly identify with a parent who has been cuckolded by a spouse.

Clinton may be the beneficiary rather than the victim of this divorce-driven distrust. His post-convention political revival may relate directly to his sentimental acceptance speech and the film of the candidate snuggling with his wife and daughter that preceded it. A good deal of election analysis has focused on Clinton's and Gore's success at communicating important details about their families. But it wasn't just being personal that counted: it was the nature of the revelations themselves. In the biographical film, Clinton conveyed that he was especially devoted to his own daughter because he knew what it was like to grow up without a father. He revealed, too, that he was abused by his stepfather and that he stuck by his mother, who was also abused. "I am not the unfaithful, abandoning, slick father you fear," Clinton said in effect, "the father who says one thing and does another, who makes promises but doesn't deliver. I was an abandoned, abused child who knows the pain of being left and mistreated." At the convention we witnessed a new form of generational transfer: Clinton represented not the older generation of abandoning fathers, but a young generation of abandoned children. Gore, too, who sat by his injured son in the hospital, assured Americans that he was not a father who would abdicate his fundamental commitment.

I doubt the Republican campaign will have similar success with voters from divorced or single-parent homes. It has always been dangerous to stress family values with adults who grew up in homes that deviate from the traditional mold, and in this race it appears to have backfired. Not only did it seem intolerant, less an appeal to an ideal than a cudgel, but it also began to reek of sanctimoniousness, the brand of phoniness that voters wary of being duped may especially despise.

As divorce and other family troubles increasingly influence political discourse, we will probably see more and more unabashed acts of self-disclosure. But there are better ways to deal with this distrust. Adults from divorced or single-parent homes are not doomed to unrelenting cynicism. Beneath every cynic, as the saying goes, is a romantic and an idealist, and perhaps nowhere is that more true than for children of divorce. Nowhere is the yearning for a good father deeper than among children who have lost theirs. Neither pieties about family values nor self-display can take the place of the antiquated notion of making realistic promises—and sticking by them.

RICHARD WEISSBOURD is a psychologist and a research fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

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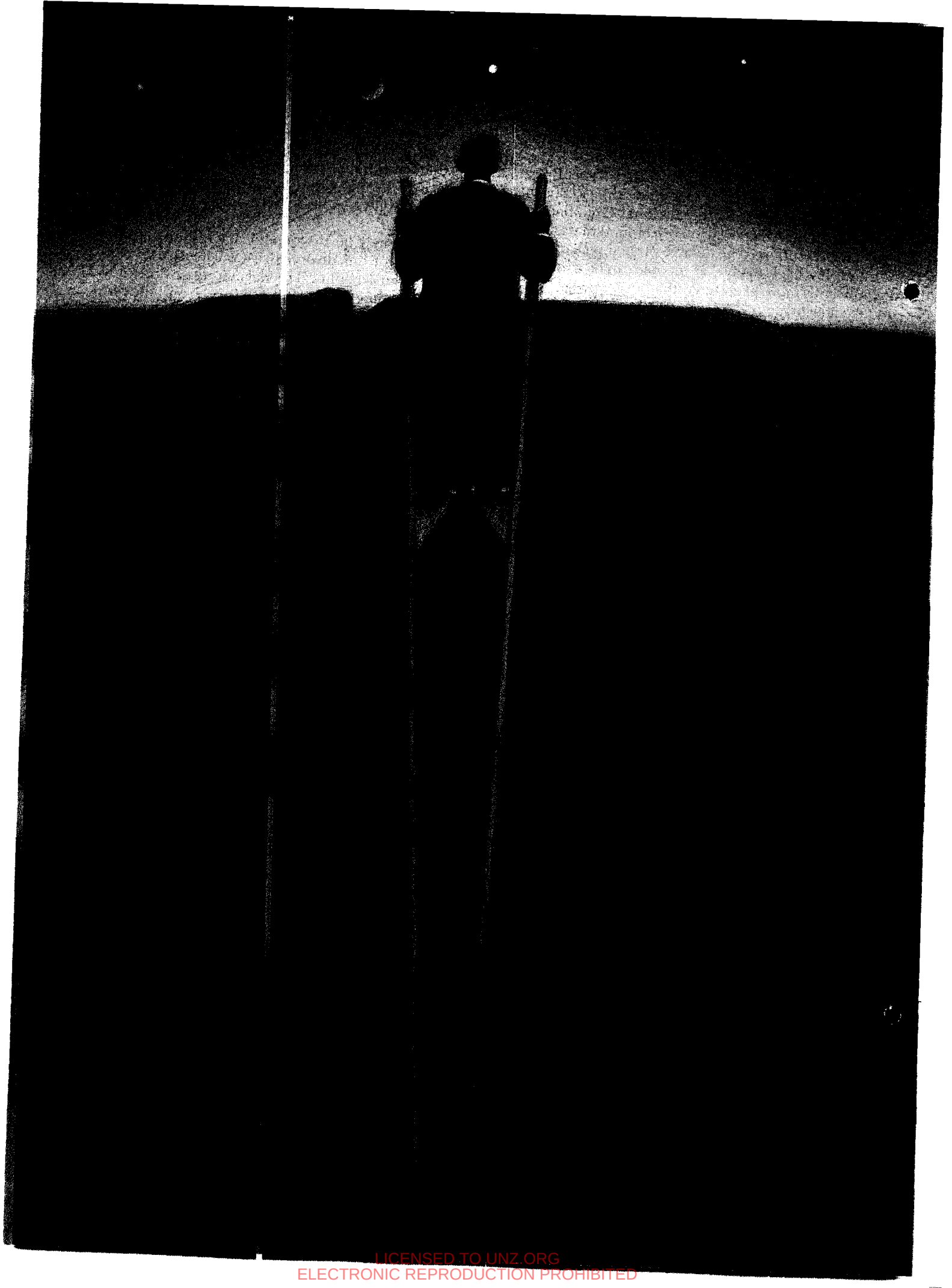

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An interview with the ancien régime.

LUNCH WITH BAR

By Barbara Grizzuti Harrison

Anna Perez, Barbara Bush's press secretary, seats me to the right of Mrs. Bush, who says, "But that's wrong, that's not protocol, why is she sitting there, she shouldn't be sitting there, she should be sitting—where?" Perez, a calm and calming woman, explains that the White House tape recorder has been so wired as to make it necessary for me to sit where I am (in a mini-fluster of my own), readying my tape recorder for our luncheon interview. "Oh that's all right, then," says Mrs. Bush. "If you need a back-up for your tape, you can have it, and we can blackmail you later." Susan Porter Rose, Mrs. Bush's chief of staff, who sits across the table from me, smiles wanly.

We are served the first course. Very pretty, and very spare: bay scallops (three, with decorative squiggles of green weedy stuff) and chicken breast (a portion so small I have to be reminded of its existence). "You can chew in between questions," my hostess says.

My first question establishes the pattern to which she will tenaciously adhere: my questions will be personal, her answers will be political—campaign stump speeches. In fact, her voice assumes the authority—and, rather eerily, the cadences—of the man she calls "Georgebush."

I ask her whether being married to the head of state makes her feel more or less safe, more or less vulnerable than if she were not married to the putative protector of us all. "I feel much safer now because of what Georgebush did a year ago. I mean the fact that he got a coalition at the U.N. for the first time, it's done wonderful things worldwide, wonderful things for agriculture, for labor—different things. It's kept the peace some. Believe you me, Georgebush worked hard at getting that coalition. The world's much safer because of that."

"What would you like people to know about your husband," I ask, "that they don't know?"

"Hmmmh. [Lengthy pause.] There are a lot of things I'd like people to know that I don't think they know. For example, I wonder how many people know that there are more women in high positions in this administration than ever before in our country. [My heart sinks.] And I think people should know—I think people do know—that he's a decent, fine, caring, very wise person.... When people think about what he's done for the environment—it's the only clean-air act we've ever had...."

What, I ask her, is her husband's central passion? "I hate to speak for someone else," she says. "I think that George feels—gosh! I hate to put words in his mouth. I think he feels we have to have the best-educated populace in the world. We really need a congressional action, it's very exciting—his education plan."

I understand, now, something Perez said earlier. "I don't really know Mrs. Bush," she said. She has worked for Mrs. Bush for close to four years. "I don't know Mrs. Bush at all." At lunch Perez is silent, except when Mrs. Bush addresses herself to the subject of rap music and Tipper Gore's campaign to label albums that have violent and obscenely sexual images.

"I'd like to see Tipper Gore stand up and hang in against it," Mrs. Bush says. "The things they're talking about are so bad you can't believe them. That song about policemen is unspeakable. Disgusting. Tipper Gore was right, and I don't think she ought to back off.... Will she be persuaded to? Well, we'll see; *I* don't know.... There were two raps about killing whites. Sister Souljah. I didn't like that. 2-Live Crew? Too terrible."

Perez says: "The kids who are buying the really out-of-bounds rap are the same kids who are buying the really hard-core grinding heavy-metal music: white suburban teenagers. It's a vicarious thrill for them." Perez is black.

In an effort once again to depoliticize the conversation I evoke Millie, in whose name Barbara Bush wrote *Millie's Book*, the proceeds of which went to the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. It is dedicated, by "Bar" and Millie, to "George Bush, whom we both love more than life." What does it mean to love a man "more than life"?

"That's right. That's right," Bar Bush says. "It means you'd throw yourself on a live hand grenade for Georgebush. I'm not sure Millie would, but I think she would. But I know I would because I know he'd do the same for us.... Millie said in her book—I think it would be Millie, not I, who'd make this brilliant statement—that you *have* to adore someone who adores you. She was talking about how much [longtime aide and personal assistant to the president] Don Rhodes loved C. Fred Bush [the spaniel that was Millie's predecessor], and loved George, because they had earned it. Love doesn't come just out of the blue. George has earned this enormous love we all have for him."

Millie has opened the floodgates. "Georgebush and I don't color each other's moods, no. Depression is not in my repertoire. The one cheers the other up. George and I long ago decided: Don't whine, not even to each other. I prefer to talk about the wonderful part. The truth is, one of George's great qualities is that he remains steady and stable. Others around may flail and faint, but he doesn't, he's not fainthearted and he stays the same." (Earlier, Mrs. Bush had mused aloud: "No one would have believed it. Certainly not Mother. Mother was killed before all this happened.... All this was not supposed to be my fate. Father appreciated George. Mother did not. I have it in writing that Father approved of George. No one needs to know it as long as I know it.")

Barbara Bush has read the hard words about her husband having been an absentee father. Her maternal and wifely passions having been ignited by magazine criticism, she welcomes the opportunity to deny it. Her hus-

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band, she says, calls his mother often, sometimes every other day. When Barbara is up at Kennebunkport, George calls twice a day. What's more, she says, George "could tell you this very moment where all five of his children are, and what they're doing. He takes joy in those children."

For a politician to take joy in his or her children is often tantamount to exploiting them. I ask her what she thinks of Al Gore having, at the Democratic convention, offered his 13-year-old son, struck by an automobile and badly hurt, as evidence of spiritual and family values.

"I did not watch that convention. I didn't. I am certainly not a sadist . . . " *Masochist,* Perez says quietly from the other end of the table. "What's the word? Masochist? I'm not that, that's for darn sure. But of course I know about Al Gore's son—the president was very involved in that; he wrote the boy, had him come to the White House and had pictures taken afterwards. . . . We had a personal tragedy, as you know." (The Bush's second child, Robin, died of leukemia when she was 3.) "I never talked about it until Georgebush ran for president—then you had to, people asked you.

"Was Gore exploitive, manipulative? That's their business, I have no opinion on that. Everybody has to do their own—his or her own—thing. I might judge, but I'm not going to cast stones. I might in my heart say I wouldn't have done that—but, no. I don't think there's a rule for what's good taste or bad taste, I think that's up to what he feels in his heart. And what the little kid feels. And I didn't see the convention anyway."

The sore spot having been touched, she cannot keep away from it: "The thing that's bothered George the most, what he likes least about politics, is that our children are—I can't think of a bad enough word; there's no privacy. It's been terrible for our children. . . .

"It kills you, just devastates you—the S&L thing. Considering there must have been a hundred thousand outside board of directors, and all Americans know only one—Neil Bush—who happens to be the most honest, decent, fabulous young man, who has really had his whole life changed. Amazing. . . . He's gonna be just fine. But it is not easy for him. Nor his wife. Nor his children. They know he's never done anything wrong in his life, so that's O.K." Her eyes tear when she mentions Neil.

"Statistics show that if you run into troubles like we did, 70 percent of the people get divorced. The other 30 percent get much closer. That's what happened to us. George made me share, he didn't let me grieve alone. Sometimes when I get letters from people whose children have died and they say their husbands won't talk, I say let him talk, talk, talk. You just got to make him. George wouldn't let me just not share.

"Have I been alone? While he was in the great world? Nutty. Nutty. Nutty. He called every night and he loved those boys and he certainly loved his girls. When you're in my business you just can't listen to all that. . . . You don't read in the newspaper about the banks that *weren't* robbed that day. . . . Granted I was mad as the dickens when I read the [*Vanity Fair*] article, 'cause it was so hurtful"—alleging, as it did, that President Bush was a faithless husband as well as an absentee one, and that Barbara Bush was the kind of wife, simultaneously bitter and submissive, who played tag to assumed greatness. "But then I thought: this is so silly, I never met this woman, I don't know her, she's repeating myths. They were just trying to get George. They attack our children, they attack me, but that's not us—that's *him.* It's too bad; it's so ugly. She didn't even know me to begin with. Anna, have I ever met her? No. Never met her. As far as I know, she is just a magazine, not a person . . . just a magazine.

"If you believe in God it makes life considerably easier for you. George's mother is 91, his aunt is 93—that's one reason I'm up in Kennebunkport a lot—and I'm beginning to see that they're eager to go on, past that little door. . . . Having seen a child born and the same child die, and having been with her for both those events, I had a very certain good feeling about it. It broke my heart, but I did. I really felt [Mrs. Bush flings one arm up and makes a clucking sound with her tongue] that the body was left and she went up with God. I don't know if she went up or sideways, but I really felt that she went up with God. I thought that was nice. It would have been very hard otherwise. As it was, it wasn't a lead pipe cinch."

We are served peach sherbet in a nest of dark chocolate and fresh peaches *en gelée,* accompanied by miniature cookies. "We don't have dessert when you're not here." Mrs. Bush helps herself to a spoonful of sherbet (which is delicious). She glares at the cookies and forestalls my question: "*Please.* That's *not* my cookie recipe," referring to one that *Family Circle* printed. "I didn't think anything about it till I read they were going to make 15,000 for the Republican National Convention. Fifteen thousand of the wrong cookie? I said to Anna, you *stop them right now.* You did stop them? I have a wonderful one called Patsy Caulkins chocolate-chip cookie recipe, a *won*derful cookie; we just made a ton of them in Maine. To think they were going to have a dough thing that wasn't mine! To think of 15,000 of those things being made!

"What people are losing sight of, cookies or not, is that two men are running—one who is running a state that's rundown and in the most terrible state in the world after sixteen years, and one who is really qualified, set a standard for any president to follow, a man who has made the world a more peaceful place."

The woman who is George Bush's lunchtime spokeswoman, had she not married her young husband when she was 19, would like to have been a nurse: "I really like the hands-on poking life, I would have liked that." She says this with no apparent regret; she will not have it said that she has lived a derivative life:

"Love at first sight? No, no. I was a lot lucky. I knew he was the most wonderful-looking man I ever saw, but I don't think I knew what love was until we'd been married five years. I mean I think I really loved him, but I don't think I really liked him. I'm not saying that the right way; didn't have the depth of love. . . . I don't know how you know at 19."

"We were babies at 19," I say. And she says, flaring: "Not

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me. I was married." And "a lot lucky."

"Does that mean," she says, inbred modesty propelling her into the use of the second person, "you haven't gone out and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for others because you've been lucky enough to be able to not have to work? I consider what I did in my life a great luxury. But I didn't just think it was a free ride. Millie has made me legitimate. Who else do you know that wrote a book that made a million dollars for charity and gave it all away? I was feeling a tad guilty by the women's movement until Millie did what she did. And it was all by myself, nobody helped.... Every word was written by me and Millie."

Millie wrote her book in 1990, by which time Barbara Bush had been married for forty-four years. And until that time, did she believe, as has been suggested, in rigid role separation; was she—is she?—the quintessential '50s woman?

"Rigid role separation? Do I believe in equal rights for all women? Do I enjoy women? Yes. Do I dislike men? No. I like them very, very much. I think some feminists do dislike men, and I think that's too bad. I have an all-woman orchestra working for me except for Jay [Jay Suchan, an assistant press secretary]; I'm more comfortable working with women; but do I have enormous respect and affection for men? Of course.

"'Year of the women'? That's so ridiculous. We had more women running in the last election two years ago for the Senate and Congress," she said, incorrectly, "and did the women's groups support them? No. Did Emily's Group support Republican women? No. When it's a Republican woman, it's not the year of the woman.

"And I don't see how you can give Anita Hill credit for bringing sexual harassment into the open. We are very very proud of this girl in the Navy who talked about sexual harassment [Lieutenant Paula Coughlin in the Tailhook incident]; we met with her, and she is wonderful. It had to be done. Somewhere along the line we have to take responsibility and stand up. If you talk dirty to me, I'm going to get another job. Anita Hill? How can you say that after the Rowman girl, Boman [Patricia Bowman, William Kennedy Smith's accuser], whatever her name is? People have been saying it for years and not being listened to. Years. And you see: I happen to think that Clarence Thomas was innocent, that there is *another problem* in there."

Mrs. Bush finds it possible to damn Hillary Clinton with faint praise: "She certainly is a very good lawyer. Everybody does things differently and she's considerably younger, so I wouldn't be spending hours—though I have a lot of friends who are younger—but it's very hard to say do you like someone who's running against your husband and cutting him to pieces. I'm not gonna stand around and say I love her, but I don't dislike her, and I felt very sorry for her in the beginning, because this is not a game you go into without being touched and I think she got touched quite a lot.

"You need to know about character, you don't need to know about sex. How can anyone know about *her* sex life," she says, pointing her index finger in the direction of Anna Perez's face, "or *hers*," pointing at Susan Porter Rose, "or *hers?*" pointing at me. "Character, though—are you loyal, are you true to your commitments, do you keep your word, do you do your best, are you decent?—that counts with me. But that other—sex—I don't want to get into that other.... An outrage."

A darkness colors the First Lady's voice, an intensity heralding an entry to the core of her wounds: "I don't think she said, anything, anything [about George Bush's "Jennifer"]; I don't think she said anything, I don't believe she said it, because it's so ugly. I don't believe she said it." Hillary Clinton is on record as having said it, and as having apologized for having said it.

The First Lady, amid a tinkling of coffee spoons, recalls herself to her persona, and says, with every appearance of flipness: "The rumors are not true. How can you deal with what ain't?"

She can't maintain the appearance of flipness. "I was really offended by [what was said about] my relationship with my husband, who I really do love more than life, and who I think loves me and always has. That hurt. 'We've noticed this cooling'—that hurt me a lot. I know I've never met that writer, I couldn't tell you her name now. But it hurt, that article. She said we 'transcended sex.' That just hurt me a lot.... I am strong and he is weak. That's a theme they had before. They don't know strength when they see it."

One doesn't know how hard—or how easy—it is for her to toe the party line. One doesn't know whether she herself believes it or whether it's a case of to thine own husband be true: "Condoms? Well, if you abstain, you don't need condoms, do you? I believe men should be responsible too. For years men have gone scot-free. I'm talking about a man in New York—a boy—impregnated eight young girls, same Harlem Hospital, all have AIDS...." Fact? Hyperbole? Sounds like Georgebush.

She has been called the most popular First Lady in recent history, and she relishes the encomium, even as she dismisses it: "Who dislikes being liked? Of course it's baloney. I mean, people—if they do like me, Barbara—like me as I am, and it isn't tough to live up to that. You don't have to live up to *nothing*. Here I am," she says, flinging her arms wide, "nothing. If people thought I was beautiful, brilliant, glamorous, and all those things, it might be a tad of a problem. But people don't think that of me.

"What do they think? That I'm their neighbor. They know everything about me. Everything. They know I love my husband. They know I love my children. They know I love my God. They know I love my country and I adore my life. I'm not smarter than anybody else, I'm not dumber than anybody else. I am loved."

Anna Perez walks me to my waiting car. She thanks me for lunch. "But I should be thanking you, Anna."

"Oh, no. I never lunch with Mrs. Bush. I don't really know Mrs. Bush at all. It was a good interview. I learned something about the cookie recipe I didn't know."

BARBARA GRIZZUTI HARRISON is the author of *Italian Days* and, most recently, *The Astonishing World* (Ticknor & Fields), a collection of essays.

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THE NEW COVENANT

By Fred Barnes

Bill Clinton's speech at Notre Dame University on September 11 wasn't likely to generate much national press attention, yet Clinton and his aides took enormous care in preparing it. They consulted dozens of people, including New York Governor Mario Cuomo, Senator Harris Wofford of Pennsylvania, President Timothy Healy of Georgetown University, and old college friends of Clinton's. Former Representative Toby Moffett of Connecticut, whose daughter Julia works for the Clinton campaign, submitted a long memo. David Kusnet, the speechwriter in charge of the Notre Dame address, scavenged material for Clinton to read: Senator Daniel P. Moynihan's speech at Notre Dame in May, Cuomo's published diaries, Cuomo speeches, etc. The speech Clinton finally delivered took weeks to draft. And Clinton was actively involved in the drafting.

This extraordinary effort produced one of Clinton's most substantive speeches of the campaign. It was not only his major address to Catholics. It dealt with the broader issue of religious faith and its role in American life. Clinton's chief strategist, James Carville, described it as a "defining speech," revealing Clinton as an unabashed Christian ("my faith is a source of pride to me") and a man of strong religious sensibility. "If elected," Clinton added, "I will be the first president to graduate from a Catholic college, Georgetown University." He got a standing ovation.

Religion is the stealth issue of the presidential race. It will probably have more influence on the outcome than any issue except the economy. Clinton and his handlers have understood this from the beginning. They also know it's not a plus with most voters if a presidential candidate is perceived, as Michael Dukakis was in 1988, as indifferent or hostile to religious faith. Thus Clinton and his vice presidential running mate, Al Gore, have taken the next step, affirming the value of religion and touting their own faith. Though both are Southern Baptists, they've deftly avoided sectarian splits and embraced what sociologist Nancy Ammerman calls "a generic American faith." Their message is non-threatening: I'm religious, but not to the point of imposing my faith on anyone or deciding any issue on religious grounds.

The political results are impressive. Clinton has made remarkable inroads among evangelical Protestants and Catholics, two groups who trended Republican in the 1980s. These are large voting blocs, especially significant in the South and industrial Midwest. Evangelicals make up 23 percent (43 million people) of the voting-age population, and Catholics about the same. In 1988 Bush got 77 percent of the evangelical vote, leaving a paltry 23 percent for Dukakis. This year "Clinton should be able to get at least 30 percent of the evangelical vote and could reasonably aspire to 40 percent," says John Green of the Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron, which surveys evangelical voters. "Anything over 40 percent would generate a landslide for the Democrats."

Pre-Clinton, Republicans thought the religious issue was theirs alone to exploit, and it was. This year the issue has backfired on them. Bush's lame acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in Houston was overshadowed by the speeches of Patrick Buchanan, who spoke of a "religious war," and Pat Robertson, the Protestant evangelist who said traditional values for most Republicans "start with faith in Almighty God." Two days after the convention, Bush complained in a Dallas speech that Democrats had left "G-O-D" out of their platform. "That bombed," says Ralph Reed, executive director of Robertson's Christian Coalition. "And Bush got whipsawed." Bush and his allies in the religious right came off as narrow, rigid, and sectarian, exactly the sort of believers most Americans don't want their political leaders to be.

For Clinton, religion offers the way out of a problem. Millions of evangelicals and Catholics are turned off by his support for abortion and gay rights and by his party. Even those who like Clinton's economic pitch are uncomfortable with Democratic social values. But these are offset by his public embrace of religion. Moreover, Clinton talks about his faith in a seemingly genuine way. He's been going to Baptist churches, white and black, and Pentecostal gatherings for years. And Reed was amazed when Gore, during the vice presidential debate on October 13, began a thought with the words, "I'm taught in my religious tradition . . . " Reed says he forgot what Gore said after that. "I thought, wow, you can go to South Georgia and speak to a Baptist association and begin any sentence with that phrase and get away with it. What you've done is rhetorically dropped their psy-

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chological barrier. Can you imagine Mondale saying that?"

Clinton's emphasis on religion began at the Democratic convention in July. The thirteen-minute film about Clinton produced by Linda Bloodworth-Thomason included an interview with his half-brother, Roger. "Religion was really important," Roger said of their upbringing. "Church-going was really important to the two of us.... Even to this day, it's an extremely significant part of his life." Then, in his acceptance speech, Clinton twice quoted from the Bible. He tinkered with a passage from 1 Corinthians: "Our eyes have not yet seen, nor our ears heard, nor our minds imagined what we can build." The actual passage refers to what God can build.

Pat Robertson jumped on this in a report to members of his 700 Club. "He twisted the words of the apostle Paul from being God-centered to being completely man-centered," Robertson wrote. True, and other Christians were mad as well. "Some of my fundamentalist friends were offended by that," says Green. "But regular evangelicals were impressed that he would even try to quote from the Bible. They had thought of the Democratic Party as a secular party."

Four days after the convention, Clinton made an hour-long appearance on VISN, an ecumenical Christian cable network. Sitting in front of the altar of a Presbyterian church in Wheeling, West Virginia, he delivered a remarkable testimony. "If I didn't believe in God, if I weren't, in my view, a Christian, if I didn't believe ultimately in the perfection of life after death, my life would have been much more difficult for me," he said. "I had a tough childhood, a not all that easy adulthood at times. My faith has enabled me to keep living and keep going and keep doing things." Questioned by Judy Woodruff of the "MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," Clinton elaborated. "Like other people, I have had crises in my life, personal crises, personal failures, the sense that I had let myself and others down, the sense that maybe I'd never be the person God wanted me to be."

Clinton has walked a fine line between identifying with believers and scaring non-believers. "The fact that I have a deep faith in God and a sense of trying to do the right thing every day should be reassuring to people," he said on VISN. "It will make me more humble in office.... It will make me a stronger person." VISN rebroadcast the Clinton interview over and over again.

Hillary Clinton's image has also been softened by a public declaration of faith. She is a Methodist. In early September she, her friends, and several Methodist ministers were interviewed for an article by the United Methodist News Service. The writer, Jean Caffey Lyles, concluded: "A Clinton White House would inherit a thoughtful theologian-in-residence with an active prayer life and a strong social conscience." Hillary said she likes the Methodist Church's "emphasis on personal salvation combined with active, applied Christianity." It is "a practical method of trying to live as a Christian in a difficult, challenging world." She and her husband "think the most important thing is your personal relationship with God." The Methodist article, showing Hillary in a new light, proved irresistible. It was picked up by the secular media. In October *Christianity Today*, an evangelical magazine, came to Hillary's defense. "Many evangelical women ... have more in common with Hillary Clinton than with the other candidates' wives," wrote LaVonne Neff, a senior editor at Tyndale House Publishers.

Bill Clinton's strongest appeal is to moderate Southern Baptists, the minority faction in that denomination. Its publication, *Associated Baptist Press*, has ballyhooed Clinton and Gore as "the first all-Baptist ticket for the nation's two highest offices." The Clintons and the Gores "are as engaged in religion as any four people we've ever had running for office," says James Dunn of the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington. "They're not superficial churchies." The fundamentalists who control the Southern Baptist Convention are less enthusiastic. The Sunday school lesson they've put out for November 1, the Sunday before Election Day, is devoted to the subject of leadership. It lists great leaders, among them Gandhi, Churchill, and George Bush. Clinton isn't mentioned.

At Notre Dame, Clinton recalled John F. Kennedy's talk to Baptist ministers in Houston in 1960. But Clinton, a Baptist addressing Catholics, wasn't trying to be the mirror-image of JFK. Kennedy sought to combat intolerance of his Catholicism. Clinton aimed to dissolve doubts about his character and seriousness. "These doubts had very little to do with his being a Baptist," says a Clinton adviser. "He didn't have to say, 'It's O.K. to have a Baptist in the White House.'" What Clinton did say was that his values have religious underpinnings. He talked about Catholic social philosophy, community, stewardship, and "a spiritual crisis" in the country. "America does not need a religious war," Clinton said. "It needs a reaffirmation of the values that for most of us are rooted in our religious faith."

Notre Dame, though not a lion's den, wasn't friendly turf for Clinton either. The school is conservative, its students predominantly Republican. A plane pulling a banner saying, "No Draft Dodgers for President," circled the campus during his speech. Clinton was heckled by anti-abortion protesters sprinkled strategically through the audience and by Bush backers. He persevered. The national press took little notice, but Wofford, a convert to Catholicism and former Notre Dame law professor who joined Clinton on stage, insisted the speech has had a "ripple effect." Attitudes, even among conservative Catholics, toward Clinton have changed. George Weigel, a Catholic intellectual who supports Bush, says Clinton "does not give off that aura of cold, rational secularism that Dukakis did. He's not religiously tone deaf." That's one big reason he's headed for the White House. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Celebration

It's Hal Hartley time. And a very good time that is for American film. Hartley has now made his third feature. I missed his first, *The Unbelievable Truth*, and I regretted this when I saw his second, *Trust*. Now comes **Simple Men** (Fine Line), which makes it time to celebrate.

Hartley has a view of film that begins, as it often does in the best instances, with a reordering of priorities. Most of the matters that preoccupy most writers and directors, including some very good ones, are of small concern to him—suspense, verisimilitude, construction toward climaxes, sympathy in its lowest (sometimes nearly repellent) sense. He writes and directs in a mode that, at first, seems to attack conventions. But soon it's clear that his work is wholly positive. He isn't out to attack anything: he is simply building his own conventions out of his own convictions.

Simple Men concerns, first, Bill McCabe, who, insofar as he is anything, is a professional crook in New Jersey. The film opens with a robbery, funny in an Ionesco-like way, in which Bill is cheated of both his proper share of the loot and his girlfriend. He meets his younger brother Dennis, a student, and learns that their father has been arrested. The father is a former baseball player, well known, who is accused of bombing the Pentagon in 1968. (He's called "the radical shortstop.") Father escapes from custody. Most of the film is about the brothers' search for him, on the basis of one wispy clue, all over Long Island.

If the above sounds wild, that's only where the wildness starts. Yet the film is never blatantly farcical: it's much more quietly witty. On Long Island, Bill and Dennis encounter a young woman called Kate, odd and aloof, who runs a roadside café. After a while Bill and Kate unite, though she has a runaway psychotic husband (who returns at one point just to get his leather jacket—he's cold). Staying with Kate is a young Romanian woman, also odd and aloof, who attracts Dennis. In time, he finds out that she's his father's girlfriend. After more time, the story concludes.

Some commentators find deep resonances in the characters and story—for instance, in the idea of two brothers coming to terms with their father's radical past. But Hartley—deliberately, I think—makes it difficult to view his screenplay as much more than a framework, drawn from pertinent subjects, on which to build a film. An air of portent haunts *Simple Men*, but it doesn't come so much from the potentially serious themes, or even from the neatly gnomic dialogue, as from a paradox: the contrast between the seemingly haphazard narrative and the way that the film is made. Every sequence, every shot is beautifully precise, delicately controlled.

The fanciful among us might scent a hint of religious implication. (Hartley is an Irish-American Catholic.) Both this film and *Trust* seem to say that life moves in unexpected, unpredictable ways, but no matter how surprising it may be to us, it is always being watched—judiciously.

For me, the story exists less because it is probable than because there is no clear reason why it could not possibly have happened; and also because it provides a number of set pieces. Not theatrical set pieces, but the sort that life itself would provide if people were as uninhibited as they are here. A lovelorn sheriff, who comes to arrest Dennis for stealing a motorcycle, suddenly launches into a florid philosophical discourse. A filling-station attendant, who plays the Elizabethan ballad "Greensleeves" on his electric guitar, greets his customers in French; he's studying the language because he has met a girl he thinks is French. (He finds out that she's Italian.) It's all something like postmodern Saroyan, cinematically embraced by the Wim Wenders who made *Kings of the Road*.

Thoughts of other artists occur—Paul Auster, for his revelation of mystery in the banal, Edward Hopper, for his vision of richness in the commonplace. But, though Hartley suggests these people and may possibly know their work, he does not imitate. He creates, with a certain feline arch of self-assurance. His films are not out to win friends but to exist in their selfhood. I know no American director since Jim Jarmusch (whom Hartley also resembles—in astringency) who has so easily yet vividly established a personal style.

Hartley would probably insist that much of this style comes from his cinematographer, Michael Spiller, who has shot all of his films. Spiller's camera

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Bob Roberts. *Tim Robbins, who stars, also wrote and directed this sizzler about political campaigning. Not much fresh news, but Robbins keeps it crackling along. (Reviewed 10/5/92)* **Glengarry Glen Ross.** *David Mamet's adaptation of his excellent play. Not quite as powerful as the original but gripping—and moving in its perceptions of men trapped in petty, semicrooked salesmen's lives. Superb acting. (10/26/92)* **Hero.** *A wised-up Capra-type plot. An accidental hero, a drifter who gets the credit for the heroism, a T.V. newswoman who chases the story. Some laughs, even some tears. (10/19/92)* **Of Mice and Men.** *John Malkovich is weak as the strong Lenny, but Gary Sinise is staunch as his pal-protector. Steinbeck's carpentered tragedy, though spottily served, still generates some force. (11/2/92)* **—SK**

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holds the same oxymoronic cool-close relationship to people and places that is in the script. The establishing long shot of the filling station, with the bearded attendant picking up his guitar, is like a frieze with a humane element. A shot from one bedroom into another in an old house gleams with the excitement of discovering fluidity in straight lines.

Hartley and Spiller met when they were both studying film at SUNY Purchase. (Hartley had withdrawn from art school to take up film.) Several of the actors who were also studying at Purchase have joined up with Hartley to form a kind of Purchase cadre. Three of them are Robert Burke (Bill), William Sage (Dennis), and Karen Sillas (Kate). They give performances that would be abstract if every detail of speech and movement were not right out of dailiness. Elina Löwensohn plays the Romanian with a subdued shadow that is both a nod to the idea of European "strangeness" and a personal secret. These four and all the cast go through the film as if in a waking dream, yet without clichéd dreaminess.

We're told that Hartley insists on his actors not "acting": he simply wants them to be there, to do the least possible to complete the moment. (This is a reminder of another Catholic director, Robert Bresson.) He choreographs more than he directs; it's not an overwhelming surprise, then, to learn that he writes his own music—under the name of Ned Rifle.

The emotional level of *Simple Men* is not high—there are only occasional outbursts—but Hartley is after patterns rather than passions. He wants to induce us to look at the world with a view that, almost mischievously, teases realism out of its usual somewhat smug self-satisfactions. The strange result is that, after a while, we seem to be watching not a film but (reticent though he is) the reified imagination of the filmmaker himself. And smiling as we do so.

This past July, the Jerusalem Film Festival devoted five programs to Hartley's work, two to his six short films, three to his features. Hartley is now 32. How long will he have to wait for his own country to recognize him adequately?

A word on distributors and producers. The current situation in the film industry is so frantic and worried that the people who have helped the idiosyncratic Hartley deserve special mention: Miramax, which distributed his first film; Fine Line, which handled the next two; the producers Ted Hope, Jerome Brownstein, and Bruce Weiss, who have been standing by Hartley for some time. It required insight and courage, and all of us owe them thanks. •

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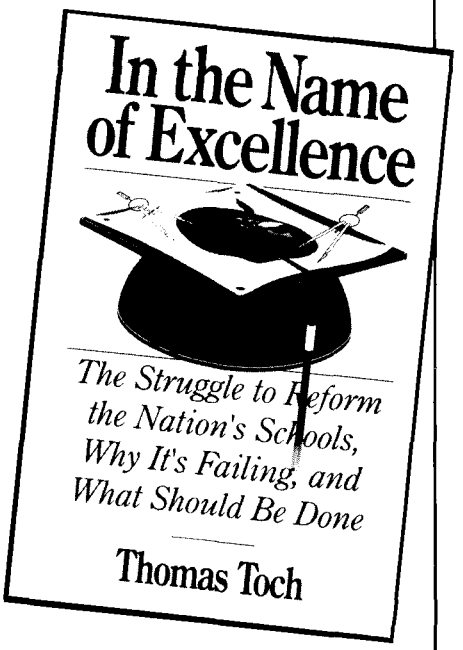

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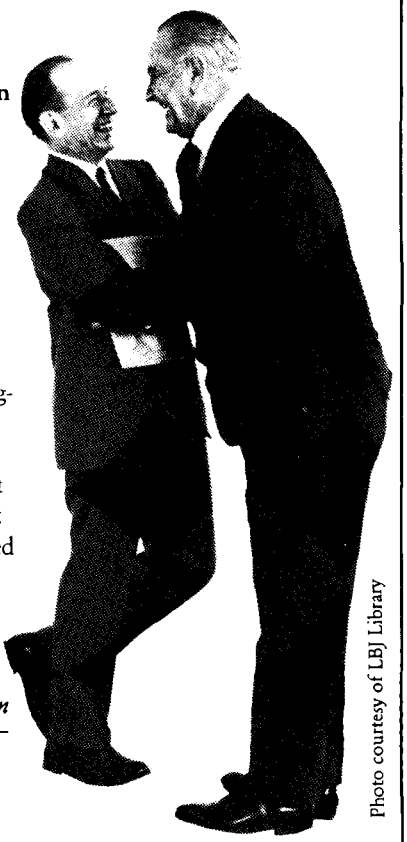

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Robert Brustein on Theater

The Theater of Pain

The level of discomfort at Ariane Mnouchkine's ten-hour Greek tetralogy *Les Atrides* has been surpassed, in my experience, only by Peter Brook's nine-hour Sanskrit marathon *The Mahabharata.* These two epic productions share a similar Asian aesthetic, but a more striking similarity is their calculated desire to make the spectators pay for theatrical satisfaction with physical hardship and spiritual denial—like yogis squatting on a bed of nails. In 1987 Brook persuaded the Brooklyn Academy of Music, at a cost of $5 million, to renovate the Majestic Theater so it resembled the crumbling, peeling conditions at the Bouffes du Nord in Paris. BAM spent only $1 million to remove jeeps, artillery, and ordnance from Brooklyn's Park Slope Armory and turn it into a replica of the Bois de Vincennes armory used by Mnouchkine for the Théâtre du Soleil. This expenditure is a bargain by comparison, and the armory's backed wooden chairs are comfort itself compared with the spine-crunching benches Brook insisted on. But the controlling impulse is the same, and so is the motive behind these imperious mandates—to transform well-padded bourgeois theatergoers into butt-weary acolytes of arcane Eastern mysteries.

The danger is that, conforming to the frailties of your class, you may leave these intermissionless presentations remembering the pains more than the pleasures. Standing in a round-the-block line for an hour (thank heaven it wasn't raining) to be admitted into the vast tenebrous building. Groping in the dark in another line to enter a non-reserved bleachered seating area. Being banned from the theater if you haven't arrived on the stroke to watch a play that begins twenty or thirty minutes late. Being restrained and rebuked by stern Gallic guardians if you dare leave your chair before the final curtain call. Mnouchkine, in a more conciliatory gesture, invites the audience to visit the dressing room area before the show to watch her actors applying their paint. But with each makeup table scrupulously decorated, and every actor on display, the effect is not unlike that of looking through the windows of the red-light district in Amsterdam.

My ungracious grumbling admittedly reflects the aches of an aging body and is in no way meant to lessen my gratitude to Harvey Lichtenstein and BAM for their Herculean efforts to move *Les Atrides* to Brooklyn. This is the legendary Mnouchkine's first visit to the eastern United States (she brought three Shakespeare plays to the Los Angeles Olympic Theater Festival in 1984), and although the overall impression is somewhat disappointing, *Les Atrides* is clearly the work of a major artist. Like Brook, Ariane Mnouchkine has committed her life to transforming the ways in which we think about the stage.

Both directors create works based on religious myths in order to urge the holiness of theater in a world without God. The absence of belief made the glorious swirling spectacle of *The Mahabharata* look largely decorative, and *Les Atrides* often runs the same risk. For half of its length these Greek tragedies seem to have been directed by a supremely gifted but essentially clueless costume designer and choreographer. Some savvy theater people abandoned the armory in irritation after the first two plays, which is a shame because *Les Atrides* grew progressively better. At the climax of *The Libation Bearers,* a defining metaphor finally began to emerge, and *The Eumenides* proved an extremely strong rendering of a difficult work.

But it took some time for Mnouchkine to recover from an initial conceptual mistake, which was to patch on Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis* as a prologue to Aeschylus's *Oresteia.* It is harsh to say that this is like using passages from Erich Fromm or Karen Horney as a preface to Genesis, but the result is not dissimilar. Aeschylus is a profound religious poet whose *Oresteia* is a meditation on the triumph of the Olympian order of gods. Euripides, writing fifty years later in a more humanistic age, was an agnostic rationalist with essentially social-psychological interests. It was precisely because of his differences from Aeschylus that Nietzsche hated this "civic mediocrity," calling Euripides a "poet of aesthetic Socratism" who banished Dionysian ecstasy and heroism from the drama: "Through Euripides the average man forced his way from the spectator's benches onto the stage itself."

Although this makes Euripides more acceptable to contemporary tastes (he is the true ancestor of Ibsen, Shaw, and Arthur Miller), he is also the dramatist least likely to provide any insights into *Oresteia. Iphigenia in Aulis* is essentially about the victimization of women. It centers on the agony of Clytemnestra when she learns that her husband, Agamemnon, is preparing to sacrifice their daughter, Iphigenia, to Artemis in exchange for favorable winds to Troy. It is, in short, an Abraham and Isaac story as seen through the eyes of Abraham's wife Keturah. Agamemnon, sitting stone-faced before the audience with legs crossed like a samurai warrior, remains deaf to all appeals to pity or moderation, while other principals and the chorus describe the pain of losing a beloved child. The play is strong in pathos, and no Greek dramatist better understood the psychological state of women in distress. But poignant as *Iphigenia* is to modern ears, it runs the risk of making Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* into a linear one-motive play about human fallibility rather than divine command.

Mnouchkine's *Iphigenia* ends (as all the plays but the last end) with the ominous sound of barking dogs. *Agamemnon* picks up the story ten years later and in the same simple setting—a large raw wood arena resembling a bullring with cattle doors upstage and matador escape areas where the chorus hovers when it's at rest. The Watchman, who begins the play squatting "doglike" on the roofs of Argos, spots the beacon light that signals the return of Agamemnon from Troy, and joyously ululates like an African tribesman. Whereas the chorus of foreign women in *Iphigenia* was splendidly Asiatic in Rajasthani brocades, the chorus of old men in *Agamemnon* looks vaguely Mesopotamian (even Ozian—like ancient Munchkins) with stylized beards and long staves. And whereas the *Iphigenia* women pummelled the stage with athletic Kathakali dances, the old men, exhausted by minimal movement, collapse upon each other, breathing heavily. The primary function of the chorus in *Agamemnon,* aside from offering hymns to Zeus, is to wander over the events of the Trojan War, a campaign that was as controversial to the Greeks as Vietnam is to us. When Agamemnon enters on his chariot (a moving platform modeled on the Greek *eccyclema*), he is enjoined by his scheming wife to tread upon a purple carpet.

The murder of Agamemnon is partly motivated by that hubristic act. It is also motivated by Clytemnestra's affair with Aegisthus, by her resentment over Cassandra (Agamemnon's Trojan courtesan), by the curse on the house of Atreus, and by several other reasons aside from the sacrifice of Iphigenia. Clytemnestra,

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in fact, offers as many motives for her act as Iago does for destroying Othello. (Unlike contemporary ideologists, great classical dramatists rarely adduce a single explanation for any crime.) By the time a mattress bearing the bloody bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra is dragged on stage, the scene is set for a perpetual saga of eye-for-an-eye vengeance.

Until this point, it is true, Mnouchkine's *Les Atrides* seemed like an exercise in monotony. The heavy, mask-like makeup (paste-white faces, dark-ringed eyes) was an obstacle to facial expressiveness. The gestural vocabulary was limited. The international cast of five principals mostly lacked vocal command though they doubled many roles and every speech was delivered to the audience. The lighting was general. Even the galvanic choral dances began to seem repetitive. Jean-Jacques Lemêtre's percussive music was more interesting to watch than to hear, as the bearded, pigtailed composer scooted back and forth among more than 100 instruments in full view of the audience.

But *The Libation Bearers*, which always struck me as the weakest of the trilogy, proved to be the play that most engaged the director, and at last a comprehensive overview began to emerge from the sequence of discrete images. Here the aggressive, scornful chorus of young serving women mocks sartorial splendor with blackened teeth, black hands, and eye sockets dripping blood, testifying to participation in the agonies of this family. Orestes, commanded by Apollo to avenge his father, cannot sustain a dance, forcing his sister Electra to prop him up. The same actor who played Orestes (Simon Abkarian, who also played Agamemnon) leaves the stage to return as Orestes' old nurse, lamenting his putative death and, in the most realistic speech of the trilogy, describing his toilet training.

Then a scream comes from the pit and a servant enters with blood on his face; Orestes has killed Aegisthus. Wielding a bloody sword, Orestes threatens to murder Clytemnestra on stage, despite her appeals to spare the breast on which he slept. He grabs his mother's trembling hand and throws her on a moving platform, standing above her menacingly as they disappear from sight. Following a leaping dance by the chorus, the streaming waxen figures of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra are hauled in on a mattress. Orestes dances around the corpses in an ecstasy of blood lust before sensing the gorgons posed to pursue him. ("You don't see them, but I see them. They push me—I can't stay here.") Two Noh-like supernumeraries in black vainly try to pull the mattress from the stage. Electra vainly tries to help them. The entire chorus vainly tries to pull the bodies—an eternal presence. The lights fade on the sound of dogs barking.

In *The Eumenides*, where the chorus reemerges as a principal character, the barking assumes physical form in the shape of Furies—apelike figures with doglike snouts and leonine manes. Exhorted by the ghost of Clytemnestra, they have driven Orestes mad and now they want his blood. *The Eumenides* traces the development of Greek religion from the pre-Hellenic chthonic deities, with their tribal system for punishing family crimes, to the Olympian system of justice and order. In the first trial in recorded history, Orestes is brought before the Court of the Areopagus, composed of twelve Athenian citizens, for the murder of his mother.

When the jury splits, this matricide is saved, ironically, by a woman. Athena casts the deciding vote for the acquittal on the grounds that, since she sprang full-blown from the brain of Zeus, a mother is not necessarily the blood relation of a child! It is to Mnouchkine's credit that she does not ridicule Athena's decision to "favor the male side in everything." The Errinyes or Furies, punishers of blood crimes, are transmogrified into the Eumenides, patrons of the hearth (and family values). And thus these "difficult divinities," these matriarchal remnants, are absorbed into the new masculine order.

In *The Eumenides*, Mnouchkine largely abandons her Eastern influence to suggest an evolution into Western modernity. The actress playing Athena, for example, wears no makeup. The chorus of Furies, leaping up and down on padded fists like the apes in *2001*, is led by three ragged women who could be female Jacobins out of Mnouchkine's *1789*. Apollo is played by a tall, handsome, perpetually smiling actor capable of being a heartthrob for Gaumont studios. And just as the choreography changes from the athletic to the grotesque, so the acting evolves from Kathakali to Brecht.

Although the individual actors—apart from the versatile Simon Abkarian and the dynamic Catherine Schaub (who plays most of the Chorus leaders, as well as staging the dances and designing the makeup)—sometimes seem inadequate to Mnouchkine's monumental design, the strength, discipline, and dedication of the entire troupe are ultimately what linger in the mind. Your body may sag, but your soul is lifted, for if *Les Atrides* subjects you to theater of pain, it has its moments as theater of imagination and majesty as well. •

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The Prisoner of Sex

BY KATHA POLLITT

Making Love: An Erotic Odyssey by Richard Rhodes

(Simon and Schuster, 175 pp., $18)

I had a hard time finishing *Making Love*. For one thing, men friends kept walking off with my review copy. As you can imagine, these light-fingered maneuvers were prefaced by expressions of keen literary interest: big-time journalist (*Looking for America, The Making of the Atomic Bomb*) writes a truthful account of his sexual experiences, a feat unprecedented since Frank Harris, Boswell, or Rousseau, depending on how one defines "truthful," "account," or, indeed, "experiences." Inevitably, the book would be returned the next day, accompanied by a disquisition on the author's stylistic shortcomings and a manic grin. I wondered about that grin, until finally one borrower expostulated, "What does Rhodes know? He only slept with eleven women, and two of them were prostitutes and three were one-night stands!"

Richard Rhodes has taken quite a shellacking from reviewers, and he deserves it: *Making Love* is mawkish, preening, humorless, and deeply embarrassing. As an autobiography, it founders on the shoals of vanity and pretentiousness. ("Come inhabit my flesh with me for a while. Is it so different from yours?" Well, yes.) As a clarion call to throw off the shackles of repression, it's about twenty years too late: Rhodes thinks he is leading a sexual revolution, when in reality he's trailing in its wake. While he inveighs against mandatory simultaneous orgasm—a doctrine most readers under 40 have probably never heard of—millions have already moved on to anal sex, making their own porn videos, and shopping for vibrators among the Veg-o-Matics at the discount drugstore.

Whether our obsession with sexual self-improvement has resulted in actual increases in pleasure and satisfaction is hard to say: How to balance those who, thanks to the open dissemination of basic how-to information, enjoy sex more against those who, faced with ever rising standards of performance, enjoy it less? There's the question, too, of how much effect the sexual revolution has really had in altering behavior beyond a constituency of enthusiasts. The wild popularity of Naura Hayden's *How to Satisfy a Woman Every Time*—a slapdash nonbook that's ridden the best-seller lists for almost a year now—suggests that lots of people are still in the dark about such elementary matters as foreplay and bathing. Perhaps our obsession with upgrading our sexual skills is a bit like our obsession with exercise and a healthy diet, which has dramatically changed the way some people live while making no dent in the general levels of inactivity and junk-food consumption.

Still, the plain fact is that by contemporary standards, Rhodes is less a revolutionary than a 1950s would-be hipster: in a word, a square. Unless you too have a teenage liaison with a vacuum cleaner in your past and find sex problematic without generous helpings of Vaseline, you will come away either grinning with rivalrous triumph, like my friends, or profoundly depressed, like me. Indeed, I suspect that the only people who will find *Making Love* the "revolutionary document of sexual frankness" and "breathtaking erotic manifesto" promised by the flap copy are those even squarer than Rhodes: middle-aged men who feel guilty about liking pornography and who consider eleven bed partners a barely imaginable cornucopia of variety.

How square is *Making Love*? Well, consider Rhodes's account of his sexual initiation. This momentous occasion follows some mild adolescent adventures in polymorphous sexuality—voyeurism, exhibitionism, bestiality, boys (merely "situational homosexuality," he is quick to tell us), and the aforementioned vacuum cleaner, which despite his encomia you should definitely not try at home. ("There are cases in the literature," said a psychologist friend of mine. "*Thwipp!*") These experiences are recounted in a style that betrays Rhodes's peculiar combination of narcissism and anxiety: it veers wildly between soft-core sentimentality ("So a drop of pre-ejaculatory fluid can evoke like Proust's madeleine") and traveling-salesman coarseness ("Fucking a chicken sounds bizarre").

A lonely Yale freshman, Rhodes wangles an introduction to Gussie, a New York City "dance hall girl" with a sideline in Yalies. What happens next is pure cliché: Gussie, of the "ravaged face" and "woman's body, generous and real," sweetly and briskly relieves him of his virginity, and he is "one with the universe." She gives him some useful advice—size doesn't count, don't neglect the clitoris—and then her eyes fill with tears: "'It was your first time,' she said more to herself than to me. 'And now you'll find a girl, get married, have babies . . .'" It's the ultimate square fantasy, beloved of Norman Mailer and conventioneers everywhere—the golden-hearted hooker who opens her soul to her john.

Let's say this scene really took place as given. (I rather doubt this, but let that pass.) Surely a mature man of the world, fearlessly hunting down the white whale of sexual truth, might ask himself a few tough questions about it now: about the ways in which this supposedly simple sexual act was shaped by power, money, class, and gender inequality, without which, indeed, it would never have taken place. *Of course* Gussie would compliment his body (size may not count, but Rhodes lets us know he has a big one), ease his nervousness, arrange sex around his inexperience and pleasure, explain her tears in a way that was flattering to his ego. That's what he paid for! She was hardly going to tell him that she was weeping because she was angry, poor, bored, repelled, frustrated, or exhausted. It would have interfered with his oneness with the universe, and she'd be out one client.

The Gussie episode points up one problem with "verity," as Rhodes rather prissily calls nonfiction. This is the inadequacy, well known to writing teachers, of unimaginative writers who think that setting down "facts" or "memories" is the same thing as telling the truth. "But that's the way it really happened!" I wish I had a nickel for every student of mine who insisted that not a word could be altered in some threadbare, sentimental, psychologically improbable anecdote whose meaning he had entirely failed to investigate and whose real source lay not in life but in some second-rate novel he had forgotten even reading.

A second problem with "verity" is the voluntary limits Rhodes places on his confessions in order, so he says, to protect the anonymity of his partners. One can imagine the ponderous internal rumblings about journalistic ethics that led Rhodes to omit from his book not only all names (we get randomly assigned initials instead) but any sort of identifying feature—except, interestingly, for Gussie and her sister (because they were prostitutes? because they are

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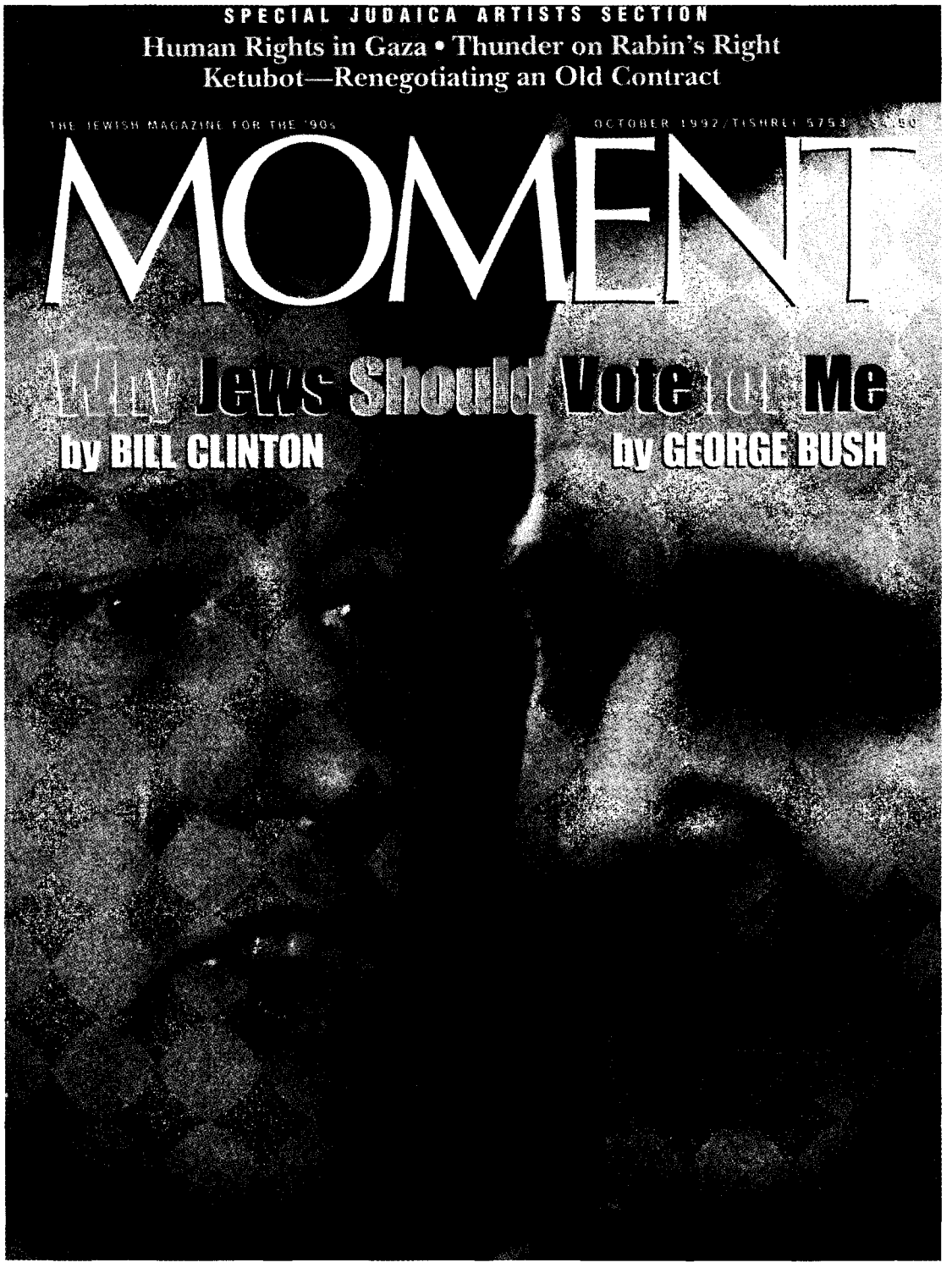
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dead?). We hear little of what Rhodes's partners were like as people. We don't find out how he met them, why they liked him (or, for that matter, he them), or what happened between them other than the immediate genital matters at hand, as it were. This last usually means what sexual problem they had that Rhodes was able, with incredible patience and broadmindedness, to fix, and what aspect of his obsessive fantasy life they did or did not fulfill.

Whether he has indeed protected the privacy of his lovers and two ex-wives is not for me to say: I suspect the determined sleuths among his circle can make some connections, and of course the women know who they are, which can't be fun for them. (Imagine having your ex-husband dispose of your decade-long marriage in a single, self-justifying paragraph! I'd be furious.) In any case, by excising from his narrative everything that makes his lovers individuals—that is to say, sexy—and everything that makes his couplings vivid and particular encounters—again, sexy—Rhodes has managed to make sex simultaneously vague and mechanical. To be fair, he seems aware of this problem, and of the narcissism it suggests, and several times insists that despite appearances he does not see women as mere sex objects: "I valued my partners first and foremost as persons"; they were all "women of independent minds." It's just that "ethics" prevents him from writing the realized and rounded tale he assures us he could easily have achieved. I've heard a lot of excuses for bad writing, but this one was new to me.

When it comes to his sexual experiences with himself, however, Rhodes is under no such constraints. Maybe that's why he dwells so fondly on masturbation. Or maybe it's because, despite all that business about valuing women as persons, it's his favorite kind of sex. Certainly, by his own account, it's the kind of sex he's had most often—almost every day for thirty years. Even on this topic, though, he's been scooped: Norman Podhoretz, in *Making It*, revealed the connection between masturbation and the solitary writing life. But Podhoretz, perhaps anticipating his future as an anti-gay polemicist and crusader for Reaganite family values, moved quickly on to other matters. It has been left to Rhodes to give autoeroticism the full macho-journalist-as-fact-collector treatment:

> I collect a bedsheet, a towel, a jar of Vaseline. The television is in the living room, against one wall. I spread the doubled bedsheet over the couch where I'll sit—I'll be working, I'll sweat. Punch on the VCR and the T.V., set the T.V. on channel 3, insert a tape, collect the remote.... I drop my pants and undershorts or remove them and sit comfortably on the couch. I pop the lid on the jar of Vaseline, lubricate my penis, and begin.

Who would have thought a little innocent self-gratification would require such an elaborate preparation, such ham-fisted seriousness, so much technological help? If masturbation is "work," and it certainly sounds like work here, what is pleasure? You can see why Europeans mock the American sexual revolution as merely Puritanism with a leering face.

Rhodes says he has watched thousands of hours of pornography, and he has a few interesting things to say about it. He notes, for instance, the virtual absence of the violence and degradation that Andrea Dworkin and her followers insist are the norm. There is something rather sweet about the way Rhodes uses porn, which is to rummage back and forth with his remote in order to detect the rare unfaked female orgasm. But it's kind of pathetic too: he's like someone who tries to learn about food by visiting every McDonald's on earth. While porn has its virtues—I'm no Dworkinite—"verity" is not among them. Indeed, along with prostitution it's just about the last place to look for a glimpse of sexual bedrock. Marilyn Chambers may really come, as Rhodes believes, or she may simply be a better actress than her colleagues. There's no way to tell. But in any case, whether she comes or not is a less important question than why Rhodes thinks studying her responses will teach him something not to be learned from his lovers. What we have here is another square delusion, which is that there is such a thing as sex outside of social context, and that this sex is uniquely "natural," "real," and "free." In reality, of course, Marilyn Chambers is no purer a sexual being than Gussie, or Rhodes's wives and girlfriends—or for that matter than Rhodes himself. She's an employee in the male-fantasy business who, if Rhodes is correct, enjoys her work.

Rhodes's interest in the female climax goes into hyperdrive when, restless, married, and 49, he becomes involved with Alan and Donna Brauer, an Esalenesque pair who promote something called Extended Sexual Orgasm (ESO), a technique that supposedly offers women literally hours of bliss. Interestingly, the video they use to prove their claim enacts one of the oldest sado-masochistic fantasies going: woman, spread-eagled on gynecologist's table, her responses exhibited to the audience by her male stimulator, who remains detached and in control. Who has the ESO, the woman or the video viewer? Rhodes finds the spectacle so moving that "there were tears in my eyes."

Barely pausing to complain about the size of his advance and the poor marketing strategy of his publishers, Rhodes tells us proudly that he ghostwrote for the Brauers two ESO "training manuals" that have doubtless helped hundreds of thousands of "dysfunctional marriages." Not his own, though. For ESO, Rhodes turns to a new girlfriend, G. They discover their inner children and a new "less viscous" lubricant, Albolene (what's next, Valvoline?), and soon G. is having fourteen orgasms per tryst. It turns out, though, that G. doesn't *like* having multiple orgasms, or feeling pressured to have them: one or two is quite enough. Rhodes's response? "I've never been angrier in my life."

Rather too hastily, Rhodes attributes his rage to his abusive childhood. But of course it's the natural outcome of his whole Stakhanovite approach to love-making: sex as labor that produces orgasms in ever greater quotas. In any case, not to worry, they resolve their impasse with "program exercises" and move on to unwedded bliss and further playdates with their inner children. The book ends with a glowing paean to himself and G. and to "the very root and core of human freedom, the little democracy of the bedroom."

Hold on a minute here. If Rhodes were self-aware, instead of merely self-obsessed, he might at least have noticed a major comic irony in his narrative. Where, after all, has his quest to free himself from worn convention landed him? In the middle of a social cliché, the successful middle-aged man who trades in his wife for a woman young enough to be his daughter. Talk about square! Needless to say, he has no comment on this circumstance and its implications for bedroom democracy. "We're preparing to grow old together," he confides happily, and G. is doubtless too tactful to point out that by the time he is old, she'll only be the age he is now, and by the time *she* is old, he'll be dead. His female readers, however, will not have missed his sexist assumption that a middle-aged woman is the equivalent of a man in his 70s.

So much for valuing women as "persons," but I never believed him on that anyway. And I don't believe much else in *Making Love*, either. Certainly I don't believe Rhodes's main self-help message, that "sex is a skill like any other." Every anxious page of his book disproves this shallow idea. If sex were just a skill—like cooking, or playing the accordion, or

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whittling—Rhodes wouldn't be in such a lather about it, nor would anyone else. Nor can sex be—Rhodes's other bright idea, which you'll notice contradicts the first—a simple Dionysian drive to orgasm, whether with vacuum cleaners or people or the image of Marilyn Chambers. If it were only that, why would anyone choose sex with one's sweetie over sex with a paid professional? I hesitate to mention love here, lest I be thought to display my gender's supposed indifference to the nitty-gritty of sex—something ... y those who have never heard women talking among themselves believe. But what about tenderness, humor, spontaneity, ease, charm, adorableness, flamboyance, intuitiveness, and ... you know ... *liking* someone?

It says a lot about our cultural moment that I'm more embarrassed about mentioning these quaint considerations than Rhodes is about recounting his comparison shopping on the lubricants shelf.

KATHA POLLITT is working on a collection of essays about women and feminism.

Mastering the Past

BY FRITZ STERN

My Life in Politics by Willy Brandt

(Viking, 498 pp., $35)

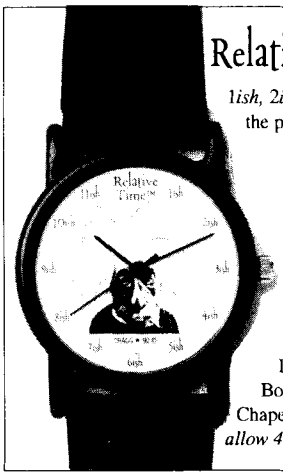
Several hours after I mailed off this review, I heard the news of Willy Brandt's death. I had taken the occasion of his book to try to assess the man—an effort that has abruptly become especially timely. Perhaps it is only with his passing that we realize his unique stature.

In a memorable moment of self-revelation, Brandt recalls (actually he does it twice in these memoirs) that on the night of his narrow electoral victory in 1969, when he was about to become Germany's first Social-Democratic chancellor in nearly forty years, he felt, "Now Hitler finally *had* lost the war." He was right: Brandt represented all that Hitler had wanted to destroy. At the same time, his feeling attested to his sense of historic mission: to lead his people to acknowledge the terrible legacy of Hitler and thus contribute to the peace of Europe. He achieved much of what he had hoped for.

In his own way Brandt exemplified the other miracle of the early days of the Bonn Republic: not the economic mira..., but the political miracle that from the moral and physical rubble that Hitler had bequeathed the Germans, a generation of dedicated political leaders emerged. The first to achieve eminence even outside the still pariah country was Ernst Reuter, elected lord mayor of Berlin in 1947. He had been a Socialist in Weimar and an exile in Turkey during the Nazi tyranny. In the cold, uncertain winter of 1948 during the Berlin Blockade, Reuter recalled as a model Churchill's rallying his nation in 1940—and he in turn inspired other German politicians, none more importantly than Willy Brandt. Both men had been anti-Nazi exiles, both pondered the needs of democratic leadership, and both loved their country without guilt.

By any standard Brandt's life was extraordinary, utterly different from that of most other German statesmen. Most Germans may know it, but outsiders need to be reminded, for life and politics were deeply intertwined. He writes with remarkable restraint, austerely, even unemotionally. *My Life in Politics* covers the years spanned in his earlier memoir, *People and Politics: The Years of 1960-1975* (1978), but also recalls his earlier life and the years after he resigned the chancellorship. Brandt's latest and last autobiographical effort is valuably supplemented by his *In Exile: Essays, Reflections and Letters 1933-1947*, published in 1971.

Willy Brandt, né Ernst Frahm, born in 1913, an illegitimate child, grew up with his mother's family in modest, lonely circumstances but graduated from a well-known gymnasium in his native Lübeck. Like Reuter a generation earlier, Brandt as a young man developed a passionate commitment to the socialist cause. He joined the Social Democratic Party and fleetingly found in it a congenial, inspiriting home he had not found anywhere else. In 1931, he tells us, he left the SPD because he found it passive in the face of the depression that threatened to open the way to Hitler's National Socialism.



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He became a dedicated member of a newly founded militant socialist party, the Socialist Workers Party (SAP), which hoped to bring together the working classes, caught in the war between Socialists and Communists, and to create a united front against Hitler and his reactionary allies. It was an adventure in hope and unreality, in part because it underestimated the Stalinists' hold on the Communists.

After Hitler came to power, Brandt worked for a few months in the illegal underground in Germany. He then fled to Norway, continuing his work for SAP groups scattered throughout Europe; in that endangered and committed existence, he adopted the name of Willy Brandt. We are not told why he chose that particular name or indeed why he initially fled to Norway when so many of the political exiles went to Prague or Paris. In 1936 he returned to Berlin as an underground emissary in the guise of a Norwegian student and from there briefly went to Spain, to the Catalonian battleground. In Spain he witnessed some of the same Communist outrages as George Orwell did, though his account suggests that he may have retained hopes that Orwell repudiated, hopes that the anti-fascist forces would cohere.

Brandt's formative experience in exile was in Scandinavian social democracy, in the pragmatic, open, reformist parties that functioned in a more tolerant political culture than Weimar ever offered. In exile in Norway and then during the war, in Sweden, Brandt turned to political journalism. The Nazis deprived him of his citizenship, the Norwegians gave him theirs. But he remained German in spirit, knowing from his own commitment and that of fellow anti-Nazis inside and outside Germany that Nazism was but a fanatical perversion of German traditions. He denounced Vansittartism (an English belief in the inherent imperfectibility of Germans, a belief born in the Great War, when Germans were branded as Huns) and wrote articles about a new postwar order for a democratic Europe. In Scandinavia he formed lifelong friendships and found a wife to whom he was married for thirty-three years. He does not mention her once in these memoirs, but she has recently published her own memoirs in Germany, reportedly a fair and engaging account of her early years when she too was a passionate anti-fascist, and of their life together.

In 1947 Norwegian friends appointed him press attaché to their military mission in Berlin; on public occasions he had to appear in Norwegian uniform, something he tried to avoid as much as possible. (In later political campaigns these early appearances were held against him and false charges insinuated that he had "fought" against his country.) The lure of working for his people, the hope for a new political beginning, persuaded him to return to German politics. Kurt Schumacher, the nationalist leader of the revived SPD, asked Brandt to become the special representative of the party's executive committee in Berlin, dealing with the local SPD and with the Allied authorities. He accepted, insisting, as he reports, that he must retain a measure of independence from Schumacher. His German citizenship was restored to him, and he gradually won out over local rivals, maintaining close ties with Reuter. In 1957, four years after Reuter's death, he became governing mayor of Berlin.

Dramatically he begins this book, as he did his earlier volume of memoirs, with the day the Wall was built in August 1961 and his city was divided. (He tells the early part of his life as a flashback.) Having caught something of his country's postwar enthusiasm for the United States, he saw in John F. Kennedy a kindred spirit and was disappointed in the Western, especially the American, response. The protests came too slowly, Brandt felt, but would louder protests sooner have changed anything? Only force or the threat of it could have blocked East German efforts to stave off mass emigration. Brandt knew the Wall sealed the division of Germany—at least for some time—and did so in his own city. Berlin was already endangered by its isolation, physically cut off from West Germany, hence ever vulnerable to East German or Soviet pressure. Even before the Wall, the city had become a shadow of its former self; still it had acquired renown by its resistance during the blockade and its successful competition with the eastern part. After the Wall, a truncated city faced further decline, ever more dependent on subventions from Bonn.

There is an unexpressed deeper reason for beginning the book with this historic moment: after the Wall was built, West Berlin had to battle with the East on endless, daily issues, on behalf of its own citizens and, if possible, for the sake of those in the eastern half as well—all the while needing the absolute support of the Western allies. As mayor of Berlin, Brandt became a major figure on the international stage. During the Cuban missile crisis, for example, Kennedy warned the Soviets against any efforts to renew the Berlin blockade—and Brandt instantly sent him a message that the Berliners would "share the consequences" of the president's policy.

Brandt became governing mayor of Berlin in the same year, 1957, that Konrad Adenauer won an absolute majority in the national elections—an unprecedented feat in German politics. In 1961 and 1965, Brandt's party nominated him to run for the chancellorship; he was defeated both times. Brandt is generous in his appraisal of Adenauer—as indeed he is of almost all his political contemporaries. He does not mention the electoral campaign in which Adenauer referred to him as "Herr Brandt, alias Frahm," or the insinuations of his having "fought" the fatherland. In retrospect, he sees a logic in the fact that Adenauer, who had gone into "inner emigration" during the Nazi period, should finally be followed by someone who had chosen "outer emigration." He is right in pointing out that Adenauer's insistence on Bonn's integration into Western alliances was rooted in his distrust of the German people—a distrust that Brandt did not share.

He does not belabor what others have called Adenauer's or Bonn's *Lebenslüge* or mortal lie, that is the promise that West Germans could have both integration with the West and reunification, indeed that the one would lead to the other—and soon. He does use a clause that applies to many periods of German history: "The flight from reality had become the substitute for politics." But he sees Adenauer as having had some flexibility, and he even suggests a link in policy when he cites instances of Adenauer speaking of the need for closer relations with the USSR and a better understanding with what at the time was still always referred to as "the Soviet zone" or, later, the "so-called" GDR.

Brandt began his governmental career as foreign minister in the grand coalition of 1966 between the Christian Democratic Union and the SPD. Three years later, after a close national election, he was able to form the social-liberal coalition. He felt that all his experiences, including his earliest years in politics and those in exile, had given him a unique preparation for the chancellorship. He triumphed after years of having been denounced as illegitimate in multiple ways. And he presided over what was probably the ablest Cabinet in the history of the Federal Republic.

Brandt's name will always be linked to *Ostpolitik*, to that process in West German foreign policy that began with the recognition of historic fact, with the renunciation of what Germany had lost, and aimed at reconciliation with the countries to the East that had suffered most under the Nazi tyranny and had fallen under Soviet domination. In the face of bitter denunciation by the Christian Democratic Union–Christian Social

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Union coalition and considerable skepticism in Nixon's Washington, Brandt succeeded in concluding treaties with Moscow, Warsaw, and Prague. And after a quadripartite treaty concerning Berlin, he also inaugurated new relations with the GDR, having from the very beginning of his chancellorship acknowledged what no one had dared acknowledge before: that there were two states in the German nation.

For the Federal Republic to sign treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia meant that it accepted existing borders. It accepted, that is, that the lands east of the Oder-Neisse Line were now inviolably Polish and that the Munich Agreement of 1938, which had surrendered the Sudetenland to Germany, was defunct; the FRG thus recognized the old Czech borders, despite the Czech expulsion of 3 million Sudeten Germans. To make West Germans voluntarily acknowledge these losses, against the howl of those who had been expelled from Poland and Czechoslovakia, was a major step in the acceptance of political reality, and it robbed the Soviet world of its favorite charge that the Federal Republic was revisionist and imperialist.

In their memoirs, both Brandt and Henry Kissinger note that all this was done by "informing" not consulting Washington, and yet Brandt rightly asserts that he never wavered in his attachment to the Western allies. In fact, it was he who gave a new impetus to the process of Western European integration, facilitating at last the entry of Britain into the E.C. At the time, *Ostpolitik* aroused suspicions and mistrust, and at many subsequent moments, such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan or the promulgation of martial law in Poland, Washington was offended by Bonn's clinging to détente. And yet Adenauer's policy of integrating the Federal Republic into Western alliances endured—despite recurrent crises and reciprocal recriminations, which have not diminished in the years since reunification.

Ostpolitik, acknowledging the past, sought an opening to a less rigid future. It found its legal and political expression in intricate treaties, negotiated with immense wrangling over every detail. But *Ostpolitik* also had its moments of high and unforgettable drama. In 1970 Brandt met the East German leader in Erfurt in the GDR—the occasion of a spontaneous outburst of popular enthusiasm for Brandt that took everyone, host and guest, by surprise: "As for that day in Erfurt—can there have been any other in my whole life charged with more emotion?"

But the greatest moment came when Brandt did "what human beings do when speech fails them," when he knelt at the ghetto memorial in Warsaw. He himself quotes what a reporter wrote at the time: "Then he who does not need to kneel knelt, on behalf of all who do need to kneel but do not—because they dare not, or cannot, or cannot dare to kneel." It was a symbolic act of contrition, as most contemporaries recognized. Will Germans of later generations remember or cherish that act committed on their behalf? Twenty years later, Chancellor Helmut Kohl—out of partisan or electoral calculation—delayed recognition of the eastern frontiers of the unified Germany, much to Polish discomfort. Did Kohl's symbolic moment come at Bitburg when he sought amnesty for the German dead? And which moment, one wonders, is more attuned to the Germany of today?

WILLY BRANDT BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Ostpolitik was ever a subject of controversy. At the time, right-wing Germans thought it a betrayal, but most Germans, I believe, welcomed it, and in 1971 Brandt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Still, the controversy will continue, indeed has been redoubled since unification. Did *Ostpolitik*—which after all gave some measure of recognition and legitimacy to the Communist regimes—help or hinder the self-liberation of the Eastern European peoples? Brandt notes the subsequent risks and ambiguities in dealing with Communist officialdom, but he also insists that over and over again he used these contacts in order to help dissidents, in order to moderate repression. Did the costs outweigh the gains? It is hard to say, but the gains were certainly considerable. The place of *Ostpolitik* in the history of postwar Germany and Europe will be debated for a very long time to come, but I believe that at a critical moment it brought Germans closer to political reality—whatever its ultimate effect on the revolutions of 1989.

In 1972 the CDU sought to use the constructive vote of no-confidence in order to topple Brandt. He survived—barely—and went on to win an astounding popular electoral victory later that year. But after that victory Brandt seemed to retreat into himself, and for a time relished power less than before. His success abroad had been largely achieved; his hope for "more democracy" at home—as the electoral slogan had it—seemed ever harder to realize. At this point of slackened energy, the so-called Guillaume affair erupted, with the discovery of an East German agent in Brandt's entourage. Finally this episode—which was also the occasion for airing all manner of rumors about his private life—led to his resignation.

In a book that is almost irenic in tone, the chapter on his resignation suggests a

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kind of bitterness. He seems puzzled—and perhaps insufficiently outraged—that the East German regime would instigate such a direct assault on him, but he also feels strongly that he was the witting and unwitting victim of neglect and malevolence on the part of West German authorities and of members of his own party, who should have warned him about Guillaume earlier and more insistently. His criticisms of his party exclude Helmut Schmidt, whose conduct in that crisis Brandt describes as irreproachable. In the original German version of the book, but omitted in translation, Brandt explicitly blamed his party colleague Herbert Wehner for intriguing against him, an accusation that caused the greatest stir in the German reviews of the memoir.

Much of Brandt's account of his chancellorship is familiar and curiously fuzzy. His earlier work, to say nothing of the already huge literature on *Ostpolitik*, covered some of the same events. For today's reader the last third of the book dealing with the years after his chancellorship is of particular interest. In it Brandt describes his work as party chairman, a position that, uniquely, he retained even after his resignation and at the express wish of his successor, Schmidt. He remained in that job until 1987, and the years since then seem to confirm what Brandt wrote regarding the resentment his earlier electoral successes had evoked: "German Social Democracy has a tradition of the moral responsibility of failure, and the flavor of success has a suspect aftertaste." That aftertaste the party has been spared in the last few years.

Brandt's work in the party did not satisfy him. He wanted to be a figure in the political and intellectual world of his time—and he succeeded, perhaps creating more controversy than he expected. His aim, I think, was to move beyond German interests: he wanted to promote peace in various regions of the world, to address the terrible inequalities between the rich and the poor. In 1976 he became chairman of the Socialist International—he resigned in September of this year—and in that capacity worked closely with Olof Palme, to whom he pays a moving tribute. Of course Brandt opposed the arms race, and he probably had a socialist suspicion of capitalist greed and power.

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In 1979 he became chairman of an important commission on North-South relations. His report became a landmark, critical at once of North and South, though as relations between the rich and the poor grew worse in the 1980s his criticism of the North mounted. He warned that the hunger of 800 million people was a threat to peace: "People with enough to eat are not necessarily free, but the starving are *never* free." There was an appealing utopian streak in Brandt, and the lofty tone he cultivated often irritated the more rigid realists.

He had hopes—and illusions. His sympathy for the Sandinistas and his criticism of American policies in Central America expressed much European and American thought—and earned him bitter enemies. But he could be bitter as well; he prides himself on having defended détente before American audiences and "against hard-liners and hysterics." Some of his utterances at the time were too benign, perhaps too "lib-lab," and critics found it all too easy to condemn him or dismiss him as irrelevant.

At times Brandt may have seemed close to a profound European error of the period, an error found on the left and sometimes on the right: the view that there was some kind of moral equivalence between the two superpowers. But that he was a dedicated democrat is unquestionable: he had learned his anti-communism in situ, and it was unshakable (he sharply disagreed with the radical fanatics in his own party). Still, he thought that morality demanded ever new efforts to reach agreements even with Communist regimes. Thus he allowed close party associates to work with the East German Socialist Unity Party (SED), and in 1987 two delegations signed a common paper titled "Conflict of Ideologies and Common Security."

In the document, the SED group recognized the need for democratic reform, while the SPD, paradoxically and implicitly, recognized the role and legitimacy of the East German state party. Not surprisingly, it was a controversial joint effort, and two years later the SPD was attacked for its collaboration with the SED and was itself abashed. Recently some observers have plausibly argued in the SPD's defense that the document actually weakened the self-confidence of the Honecker regime. Here, too, the debate will continue and new evidence will undoubtedly emerge. In his book Brandt depicts his various involvements, but there's no systematic exposition of his fundamental outlook.

He talks briefly—with a kind of Olympian detachment—about his role in the Middle East. He mentions his sympathy with Israel in general and with the Labor Party in particular. He was the first German chancellor to visit Israel while in office. But all too quickly he passes over his participation in Bruno Kreisky's ill-starred meeting with Arafat, which evoked outrage in much of Brandt's world. He is equally brief, complacently so, about German unwillingness to allow the United States to use German bases for support of Israel during the Yom Kippur War. He is generous to others—and to himself.

Brandt continued to be a world figure, an elder statesman with considerable moral authority; he won the admiration of early environmentalists. Like Palme, he was a liberal beacon in the illiberal days of Reagan and Thatcher. Accordingly he had his detractors in America—and yet he championed what after all was a great American objective, the recognition of human rights in international affairs. Brandt claims, not unjustly, that the Helsinki Conference—with its beneficent consequences—was an outgrowth of *Ostpolitik*. There may have been a touch of aloof vanity in Brandt, but he did see the world in grander terms than his opponents.

Brandt's book offers intimations of a great political life, but in most places it lacks the passion—or the important details—that would rivet readers. In it he remains a remote and distant figure; he gives too little of himself, and he merely alludes to some of his great achievements after his chancellorship (his support of Spanish and Portuguese democratic forces, for example). Perhaps because of some kind of detachment or inner peace, Brandt does not do justice to himself in this book—to the disappointment of admirers and historians alike, and sometimes the two coincide.

These disappointments are compounded by the malign neglect that Brandt's book has suffered at the hands of its Anglo-American publishers. It's not simply that the translation is wooden and misses the nuances and ambiguities of the original German. Even worse, and truly destructive, is the arbitrary (and essentially unacknowledged) abridgment of the book. That it is an abridged version is mentioned on the copyright page, but the actual cuts are nowhere indicated. In addition to the indictment of Herbert Wehner, there are many other important details that are omitted or mauled. One wonders whether Brandt consented to this work of mutilation, whether he ever saw it. Whoever the culprit or culprits, a great disservice has been done—and done sneakily.

In September 1991 Brandt wrote a short preface for this English edition in which he took account of the momentous changes of 1989-90. He sympathized with the East Germans who for sixty years had lived under dictatorships; he urged that

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the real culprits of the old regime should be held accountable, while those who made their petty compromises should be let go. As he said in opening the first all-German parliament in December 1990, in a typical late-Brandtian formulation: "One thing is certain: not many could be born to be heroes in the state ruled by the SED. And there is something else—who feels competent to judge his brother?" If Helmut Kohl was the master manager of unification, then Brandt—and Richard von Weizäcker—were the authentic voices of the German people coming together. In those months, time and again, Brandt found the right words at the right moment, devoid of triumphalism, aware of the true, the internal problems of unification.

The spirit of the Federal Republic today is not that of Brandt. He had hoped to give a moral tone to German politics, but today's xenophobic outrages bespeak an alarming reversion to very old—one had hoped defunct—traditions. He knew of the fragility of freedom and gave his own best summary of an exacting life: "To have helped in causing the German name to be linked with the concept of peace and the prospect of European freedom is the true satisfaction of my life." In the history of twentieth-century Germany that is no mean achievement, and one must hope that Germans in future years will cherish and protect it. It is the legacy of a patriot without a tinge of nationalism.

FRITZ STERN, University Professor at Columbia University, is the author of various works on European history, most recently *Dreams and Delusions: The Drama of German History* (Knopf).

The Connoisseurs' Club

BY E. V. THAW

Patron Saints: Five Rebels Who Opened America to a New Art, 1928-1943 by Nicholas Fox Weber

(Knopf, 448 pp., $30)

Patron Saints is about patronage, not about sainthood. It used to be that patronage of the avant-garde in art by adventurous wealthy individuals was fairly common in America. It looks saintly only in retrospect, now that there is no longer a true avant-garde, and the astronomical growth in wealth over the last generation has fueled merely an interest in treating art as a financial asset.

Nicholas Fox Weber has built an interesting story out of what are some footnotes to the history of modernism and its progress on these shores. His story begins at Harvard at the end of the 1920s with the undergraduate-run Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, and it reaches its climax in 1933 to 1936 in Hartford at the surrealist exhibitions, gala costume balls, and ballet performances held at the Wadsworth Atheneum, a museum that had formerly been a bastion of New England conservatism. The "patron saints" who sponsored these events, bucking a philistine tide and a neanderthal critical press, were four young men and one woman whose lives repeatedly touched, crisscrossing for about a decade until the Second World War sent them all in different directions.

In the foreground of Fox Weber's story are the Harvard classmates Edward M. M. Warburg, who died at the age of 84 just a few weeks ago, and Lincoln Kirstein. With the participation at first of John Walker (who later became the director of Washington's National Gallery), they created the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art in 1928, thus beating by a year the founding of New York's Museum of Modern Art. At about the same time a wealthy young dilettante and socialite from Hartford, James Thrall Soby, had a sudden swerve in artistic interest. Instead of continuing to decorate his house with minor American Impressionist canvases, he brought home some works by Matisse, Derain, and (curious lapse) Kisling, purchased in New York.

He shared his new enthusiasm with A. Everett (Chick) Austen, the adventurous and stylish new director of the Wadsworth Atheneum. It was there that the first performances by George Balanchine's newly formed American Ballet took place, cajoled into being by Kirstein and financed in crucial ways by Warburg. Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thompson's opera *Four Saints in Three Acts*, with its all-black cast and its famous sequence "Pigeons in the Grass Alas," lured New York's wealthy cognoscenti up to Hartford in private railroad cars in the deep depression year of 1934.

Agnes Mongan, the academic assistant to Paul J. Sachs, the influential eminence of the Fogg Museum at Harvard, was a friend and a sort of den mother to the undergraduates who ran the Society for Contemporary Art. The scion of another New York Jewish banking family friendly with the Warburgs, Sachs was a major collector in his own right and an influential shaper of artistic taste. At the Fogg he focused his attention on Old Master drawings, thus awakening a fashion in taste and collecting in this country that had previously been fairly dormant. Sachs's famous "Museum Course" at Harvard, basically an exercise in connoisseurship for gentlemen, produced alumni who went on to fill many of America's principal directorships and curatorships. Since he was well disposed to aspects of modern art (a founding trustee of the Museum of Modern Art, Sachs recommended Alfred Barr to be the museum's first director), Mongan ran no risk with him in becoming an avid supporter of Kirstein and Warburg.

Her role in this book, however, has less to do with the introduction and the success of modernism in the art world and the ballet, in which she played only the part of a well-wisher, than with the curious and almost obsequious part she played in the later years of Bernard Berenson's life at I Tatti. Because of Berenson's important catalog of the "Drawings of the Florentine Painters" and his intention to will his extraordinary property and library to Harvard for a study center, the young and eager Mongan became his eyes and ears at the university, sending him the gossip and adulation that he so hungrily craved. Mongan seems to have been completely unaware of the moral ambiguities inherent in Berenson's career and of the unpleasant prejudices and snobberies that poisoned his politics and human relationships, although Fox Weber is certainly aware of them.

These men and their art historian woman friend were an important part of the times in which they lived, reflecting and helping to shape its changing patterns of taste. Happily for the events recounted in this book, living memory is still the most important source: Mongan and Kirstein are still very much alive, as are some of the distinguished participants in their early adventures, such as the architect Philip Johnson and the retired museum director John Walker. This friendly and carefully researched book, with its close

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access to the principals, provides a valuable service in capturing the spirit of that era.

Fox Weber's heroes inarguably embodied an enlightenment in the arts and its private patronage that is one of our nation's proudest achievements. However, they did not, by themselves, as the subtitle claims, "Open America to a New Art." For all the accuracy of Fox Weber's tale and the overwhelming evidence of the essential goodness and public spirit of the "saints," his claims for their historic importance and priority are exaggerated. Certainly to have liked and arranged exhibits in 1929 or 1930 for Picasso, Brancusi, and Calder, among others, required advanced taste and social bravery, especially in the Boston area. But it's not quite the original feat that Fox Weber implies.

He himself refers to a tradition, dating back to the Armory Show in 1913 and even before, of Americans collecting and championing the newest art. And before collectors there were, as always, artists who knew what was happening, who went abroad to learn and returned carrying the torch. Weber gives only a passing nod to Marsden Hartley and Arthur Dove, among our first modernist painters, and though he acknowledges some early collectors such as Katherine Dreier, Duncan Phillips, Sam Lewisohn, and the legendary John Quinn, he never mentions others such as Walter Arensberg, whose collection was essentially formed by 1921, and the secretive publisher of *The Dial*, Schofield Thayer, whose collection, now at the Metropolitan Museum, still surprises us with the extent of its holdings. There were also art dealers such as Valentine Dudensing, Pierre Matisse, and Julian Levy, who make cameo appearances here. Their roles in bringing great modern art to these shores also need fuller study.

The fact is that modernism was an established worldwide phenomenon in all the arts well before two bright, young, and wealthy undergraduates made their splash at Harvard in 1928. By then Picasso and Matisse were the most famous living artists in the world; Dada and surrealism, which had arisen after the First World War, had wide influence in Europe; and Gertrude Stein had been holding forth in Paris for nearly three decades. The Armory Show in America had long since taken place. So had Roger Fry's great "Post Impressionist" exhibition in London, in 1910, and the Cologne "Sonderbund," in 1912. Extraordinary events had taken place in pre-1914 Russia, inspired by Diaghilev's St. Petersburg arts group formed around the *Mir Iskusstva* magazine and by Moscow's incredible Shchukin and Morozov collections, with their dozens of Cézannes, Gauguins, Matisses, and cubist Picassos.

The efforts of these talented young Americans certainly were admirable, in sum, but they hastened the inevitable. Only in the case of Kirstein and the art of ballet is Fox Weber's story not a footnote to the story of modernism but the main plot itself. The young Kirstein's recognition of Balanchine's genius, as well as his understanding of the need for a permanent school and a viable performing company to give life to Balanchine's extraordinary innovations, was a momentous episode in twentieth-century cultural life.

And historical distance permits another caveat. Some of the saints, it must be noted, had unfortunately trivial, campy, and retrograde taste in art. Neither Warburg nor Kirstein ever became serious art collectors, although Warburg possessed a pretty, Blue Period Picasso gouache (about which Fox Weber makes a big fuss) and two fine Klees, purchased from the artist during a European holiday. His financial support of the sculptor Lachaise, eschewing claims on his work, was wholly admirable. Kirstein, on the other hand, seemed to hate modern abstraction, and in the name of classicism turned his back on it in favor of a kind of flamboyantly realistic and symbolic painting. In this regard he did positive harm, I believe, to the cause of modern art when, as a trustee of MOMA, he influenced Barr, Soby, and others to prefer the kind of "magic realism" and decadent late surrealism that so dominated that museum's official taste. Pavel Tchelitchew, a third-rate painter now blessedly almost forgotten, looms large in Fox Weber's story and was the star at MOMA in the days of Kirstein's influence. Soby, in spite of the de Chiricos, Mirós, and the Balthus he later owned, championed Eugene Berman and his brother Leonid, neoromantic decorators who are also justly neglected these days. Meanwhile the young abstract expressionists, just emerging from the Depression and the war, could not arouse MOMA's attention.

The progress of modern art in America is a long and twisting road, more so than Nicholas Fox Weber seems to admit in his hagiographical study of an admirable group of "saints." But he has given us a pleasant walk along a mile or two of a little-known stretch of it, showing sights that few of us knew were there. •

Barnum's Children

BY MARC ROBINSON

Natural History by Maureen Howard

(W. W. Norton, 393 pp., $22.95)

Maureen Howard writes about her abiding subject, the family, with fierce rigor, as though she were at the same time writing in defense of the family novel itself. Not for her the cozy domestic zones where passions are labeled and personal histories are smugly untangled into "relationships." In the seven books she has published since 1960, Howard's humor and ready sympathy are buttressed by a stubborn refusal to slim down her people and their stories. She insists on taking her time, conferring on her novels such seriousness that reading them takes time, too. The narratives are bumpy, full of abrupt turns, disconcerting stops and starts. Readers keep busy putting together all the pieces she lays before them. "Come now," she seems to say, "you didn't expect me to do *all* the work for you."

Howard deliberately makes it impossible to generalize about her families, fending off the sociologists with a barrage of complicating information. "I may have a fatal resistance to abstractions," she wrote in her deft 1978 memoir, *Facts of Life*. Indeed there are few "key" passages in Howard's books where significances are at last spelled out, for she knows that a bald statement, untempered by self-deprecation, risks toppling her entire narrative. Instead Howard works by accumulation of more portable details—totemic objects, deceptively offhand utterances, telling gestures. It's by such small observations—a woman's "frayed Keds sliced for the bunions"; a man unwittingly acquiring his father's favorite conversation starter, "tell me"—that Howard's characters are best measured. They show off new aspects of their personalities with such frequency that we are

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challenged to keep making acts of recognition, to hold off reaching conclusions. At the very moment someone seems finally to have selected a permanent mask, Howard proposes a contradictory way of looking at him, one that is just as convincing. The "facts of life," the character's life, are constantly in dispute.

In *Bridgeport Bus* (1965), for instance, the character Mary Agnes Keely is ever more inventive at self-renovation, but also determined at times to tarnish her new luster and retreat to familiar ground. Peckham Strong in *Expensive Habits*, from 1986, renounces his aristocratic breeding and opens an East Village used-clothing store, but also obsessively investigates his family's fabled past. Still another character, Margaret Flood in the same novel, wants to lock into her relationships with friends, offspring, spouses current and ex, yet at the same time longs to get out from under the suffocating attention. She relies on routine—familiar wisecracks, well-rehearsed fumblings in love and enmity—but nonetheless thrills to those times when routine breaks down in a moment of flirtation or blasphemy. Such mercurial characters occupy a rigid institution like the family only tentatively, and rarely for long. Howard's families are never more vivid than when they dissolve; never more poignant than when they try, and usually fail, to regroup.

Howard's refreshing distrust of psychological consistency and ultimate "meaning" informs her new novel, *Natural History*, making its emotional appeal indirect, unassuming, yet all the more satisfying once found. Again the central figures form a family, and again the family imperfectly coheres, demands to be seen in fragments. But now Howard reaches further, beyond domestic history into histories of places, beliefs, longings, and vices.

In *Natural History* Howard returns to her native Bridgeport, Connecticut, the city fled in *Bridgeport Bus* and later retrieved in *Facts of Life*. This time she comes upon Bridgeport just as it slides from World War II prosperity, when its industries profited handsomely from military contracts, to the gray beleaguerment and dog-eared homeliness it still retains. As the war winds down, Billy Bray is comfortably settled in his tiny fiefdom as county detective, on easy terms with both the district attorney and the local mob, an expert at making his indifference seem charming and masking his bewilderment with banter.

Billy's family doesn't know much more about him than his colleagues do. Nell, his wife, no longer presses him for intimacy and instead tries to obscure her disappointment with elaborate facades. Her efforts only make the sadness more obvious: the woman reared to expect dignity and order in the domestic sphere has never quite given up hoping for a reprieve. She's always tidying shelves of majolica plates and Toby jugs, tearing down cobwebs, patching frayed elbows, or sewing loose buttons tighter—all the while worrying that others will notice the seam, the flaw, the dust.

Nell's daughter, Catherine, inherits some of the same intense self-abnegation. Even at age 11, she's anxious about her salvation, pursued by visions of mortal sin, desperate to learn how to transcend the everyday and give herself over to a redeeming mission. Catherine's brother, James, the fourth corner in the family, also wants a way out of household claustrophobia, but can't imagine what might follow such a violent severance. He is cocky and secretive, in love with movies and magic tricks, able to turn his family into rapt spectators at his performance as son and brother.

"Four faces ... each dealt a small portion of wrong and pain," Howard writes. But even at its most acute, the pain never quite breaks through the surface of their well-practiced stoicism—even when Billy's detective work takes him into the middle of a tabloid-tailored murder case and he suffers public humiliation from the acquittal of the sulky socialite who shot the soldier on leave. Not for another forty years, with Billy and Nell long dead, would their children, now in their 50s—Catherine a professional weaver, James a Hollywood actor looking for a way to regain his bankable allure—return to Bridgeport and try to identify what, if anything, held the Brays together.

Just as her characters spend most of their lives trying to dodge destined identities and elude the consequences of their past, Howard achieves her own amazing formal sleight of hand, assuming numerous guises in which to tell her story. *Natural History* is a novel always in the midst of breaking free of itself, its pages filled with brilliant variations on the screenplay, the encyclopedia, the diary, and, of course, the history book. In a prefatory note, Howard refers to the novel's "entries," as if *Natural History* were a captain's log.

Acknowledging its affinities with the distinguished tradition of narrative restlessness and genre-trespassing headed by Sterne and Joyce, *Natural History* is part mystery story, part domestic étude, part epic saga. Chapters of telegraphic reflection presented in a clipped first person vie with aloof, majestic narration in other chapters; points of view swerve violently. Often the book jumps literary boundaries altogether and reaches toward the

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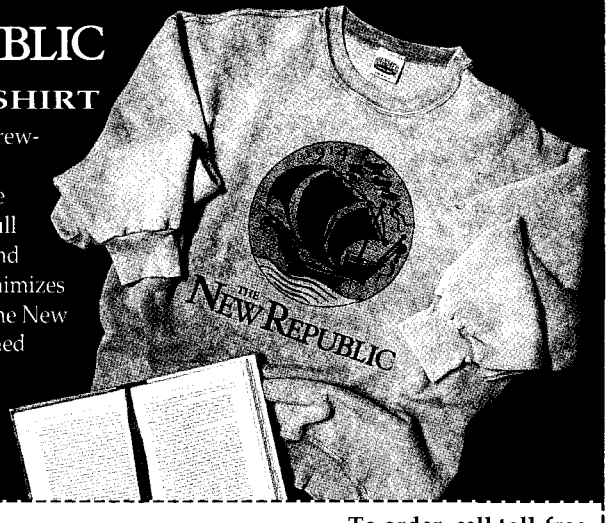

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greater tangibility of the collage. A middle section called "Double Entry" presents one story on its right-hand pages and, on the opposite pages, an assortment of drawings, photographs, diagrams, doodles, essays (including a particularly apt homage to Joseph Cornell), and scavenged images and quotations from brochures, calling cards, menus, advertisements, and newspapers—all of which speckle another written version of the Bray chronicle.

With welcome leniency, Howard announces at the start of "Double Entry" that readers should feel free to "dip in, flip back, or simply read on." She learned of the pleasures of multiplicity and distraction, she says, from Walter Benjamin, whose shade hovers over the entire novel as a sort of ideal reader. But Howard doesn't adopt the flaneur's wide-ranging curiosity simply for the amusements available. Such resourcefulness is necessary if she (and her characters) are ever going to understand their relationship to what is remembered. A subtle current of desperation runs beneath the novel—fear at the consequences of not retrieving the past, perhaps, or worry about what might happen if the search is successful—and that tension seems to impel Howard toward greater and greater acts of narrative ingenuity.

Perhaps the atmosphere in *Natural History* is so pressed because, having exerted its attractions in book after book, the city of Bridgeport has assumed an almost mystical awesomeness. Here Howard writes as if she wants to compass and contain its force once and for all. Thus *Natural History* periodically returns to cool descriptions of Bridgeport's layout: at the start Howard explicitly maps the territory, chanting its streets and avenues—North, Parrott, Main, Iranistan, Golden Hill—as if thereby to elicit their secrets one by one. But real information about this town and its citizens isn't so tractable. A long chapter called "Closet Drama," in which the prose is rigged with stage directions and notes about lighting, allows more of one character, James, to come into view. His monologue provides details of his failed marriages, show-biz rivalries and debacles, and a sudden resolution to change his fate, but most of all it allows us to hear his voice. His uneasy blend of chutzpah and self-disgust—his "you bet!" and "babe!" giving way to long silences, stammerings, and blustery impersonations—reveals the soured man hoping to act his way out of himself.

Catherine's lingering, exploratory rhythm is a marked change from her brother's. And still different voices come from Catherine's feisty roommate Mary Boyle, a social worker; Mr. De Martino, an old clarinet teacher; and James's wife, the rodeo-smitten Lilah. Having netted these lives in her imagination, Howard pulls them apart with ever-steady fastidiousness, acquiring their varied languages, dictions, ways of carrying themselves.

If Walter Benjamin is one inspiration for the novel's style, Bridgeport's favorite son, P. T. Barnum, is surely the other. He is a constant presence, captivating in his unabashed love of performance, his tireless search for the extraordinary specimen and dazzling event designed to guarantee enchantment. James is his most obvious emulator, but Barnumism in one form or another overtakes most of the characters. Whenever he's most pinched by a sense of his own weakness, Billy plays up the hard-boiled detective role, tossing salty quotables to the adoring reporters. Peaches, a neglected girl under Mary Boyle's care, creates macabre tableaux in her housing project living room, spectacular visions of her mother's many lives and lovers—*her* way to regain a family. Others in *Natural History* are always self-consciously fretting about how convincing they are as seductress, mover-and-shaker, martyr, or madwoman, as though they still believe that a sharp style can cover up a troubled and troubling substance.

Linguistically acrobatic, imaginatively daring, Howard herself is the most debonair performer in *Natural History*. Her attraction to theater animates many of her previous books; here, however, she gives herself full rein to ponder the form explicitly—in screenplay fragments, in monologues, in musings on the daily circuses at and away from home. This constant experimenting may offer her a way to transcend the sometimes exhausting inwardness of her fiction. With earlier books she reached a challenging impasse, having brought a program of character dissection to its apparent limit and running the risk of ending up in an airless world. Rather than back away from her sensibility and retrench, however, Howard chooses to barrel onward, extending her method of snaring experience to its extreme. Only occasionally does her writing idle ("Closet Drama" has its intermittent longueurs), but in general Howard widens her emotional reach, moving closest to the psychological complexity envisioned in her earliest works.

When *Natural History* does pause in its progress through styles and forms, it is usually to show that Howard has not embraced her narrative strategy uncritically. Her love of spectacle prevails, yet to a degree never reached by her characters she also understands the sham of performance—the actor's flight from sustained scrutiny, the razzmatazz that blinds real insight. A performed self, she cautions, can often become a simplified self. The distrust she brought to family fiction always remains ready to turn on herself: in the increasing flamboyance of her forms, she shows how often she has questioned the rightness of showing off all the tricks, wondered if she shouldn't have been more discreet with her characters and herself.

That mixture of fascination and aversion lends Howard's writing its unusually charged energy. A passage in which she expresses genuine wonder at one aspect of a personality will be followed by a section grounded in "been-there, done-that" tones. Throughout *Natural History*, she sounds jaded, but not yet resigned, disillusionment having made her tougher on the people that catch her attention. She's cosmopolitan company, but also fed-up with the fashionable and weirdly thrilled by Bridgeport's boarded-up buildings in smelly alleys and its aluminum-sided houses with lawn gnomes.

Dark Passage

He said he missed the city. He meant he missed her
And her habit of bumming cigarettes, showing up late,
Looking rich. It was no wonder he couldn't remember
Her face in the morning, or the name of the country
He was in, or the exact nature of his mission. He was
Afraid that if he looked at her, he'd lose her, but
He couldn't help himself. And she looked back
With the largest saddest eyes he had ever seen.
Then she was gone, swallowed by an oceanic crowd,
A Mardi Gras crowd full of pickpockets and thieves,
And the distance between the lovers kept widening,
And he kept calling her name. The ocean spewed her out
On a foreign shore. Some people wore masks.
Everyone had drunk too much wine. It was dark,
And the tape in the bistro lasted sixty minutes,
So he had now heard "These Foolish Things" in French
Seven times, only this time someone else was with him,
Whose face he never gets to see. Sleep this once
Came speedily. His ambition was lofty.
She said she meant him. She really meant anyone.

DAVID LEHMAN

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Howard negotiates a persona for herself in which the self-mockery doesn't wilt into self-effacement, and in which the confident pace doesn't smooth over the ripples of insecurity, the spasms of self-doubt. A lived life—its disappointments, hard work, minor elations—shows in her prose, her survivor's patter, its don't-waste-my-time jauntiness:

> It's the insupportable present goads me to project on the defenseless past, brings me back like James to better times. He's primed for his movie, his art, which gives us the sensation of living without direct experience of life. Please, forgive me that last if I enter a slight adjustment to the books: *I do not talk to any intellect in nature, but am presuming an infinite heart somewhere into which I play*—Henry David Thoreau, Dec. 24, 1840. Play—as an actor? Instrument? On a Christmas Eve play into, as to an audience or congregation, surely. Lord, it's good to come up with the answers, but abandon all thought that I am second sight, able to predict from my side that Cath won't on her life, that James will for the hell of it.

Howard's deep skepticism explains why *Natural History* isn't a history at all, and never could be. After rummaging in her characters' lives and roaming the byways of her city, she accepts the deviousness of her prey: the past, she writes, is "unrecoverable." It can't be seen whole, she realizes; its unities are illusory; one looks in vain for its beginning, middle, and end. On its own, the conclusion isn't anything special—what novelist hasn't had to acquire such wisdom?—but what makes it unusual here is Howard's tone: she's elated.

A palpable relief buoys the final chapters of *Natural History*, as the Bray children leave *their* histories undisturbed. Having come to Bridgeport to scout locations for a movie he's planning about the socialite-and-soldier murder case, James had hoped to unravel the confusion surrounding his father's involvement—but Catherine successfully thwarts him. We know she's right to do so, not just because there is a sordid secret better left unrevealed, but because, once it appears to be understood, the past will be reduced and shelved. It will no longer have the anchoring weight or the cautionary force of mystery.

This novel glows only subtly with a warmth that, for want of a better word, can be called spiritual—yet such is the quality of Howard's faith in the power of description and inquiry. Character and author alike stand before their lives, remembered conversations, emptied rooms, and once-treasured hand-me-downs—and persist in contemplation, asking question after question, hoping to articulate these things back into circulation. It is the writer's (and characters') ignorance and the inevitable frustration of their effort at knowledge that keeps them alive. If fiction can ever be said to be "moral," it achieves such stature not in legislating "the moral of the story," but rather in resisting easy catharsis, fixing the reader's attention on the ambiguous and the unanswerable.

MARC ROBINSON teaches dramatic literature at Amherst College.

TRB *continued from page 6*

for anyone or sees Washington as the solution to any of its problems."

Here we come to the ultimate waffle, not just of this campaign, but of the twelve-year Republican regime. For two Republican presidents have never had the courage to test the voters' true enthusiasm for their alleged anti-government philosophy. George Bush assails federal spending and meddlesome bureaucrats like a champ. But on any particular issue—be it health care or worker retraining or child care or the environment or family leave—Bush never takes the principled stand that this is simply something that is none of the government's business. Instead, having done nothing until the Democrats forced the issue, he offers an allegedly superior government plan of his own, usually involving tax credits.

Just the other day, Bush was on the campaign trail promising millions here and there for high-speed passenger railroads. This after years of halfhearted efforts, by both Bush and Reagan, to eliminate federal rail subsidies. How can Bush seriously claim there is a philosophical principle at stake in this election?

After twelve years of Republican rule, federal spending and taxes take about the same share of GNP that they took when Ronald Reagan entered office. And Congress can't be blamed. The Congressional Budget Office added up twelve years of presidential spending requests, fiscal 1982-93, and the same twelve years of congressional appropriations. The difference? Seven billion dollars, or less than $600 million a year. Apart from programs for the cities and the poor, you would be hard-put to name any aspect of government that has actually been shrunk. Republicans won three presidential elections through an ideological con game: pretending to be for smaller government without requiring voters to give up the government they like. That game is over.

Even a liberal Democrat, who believes there are many useful chores for government, might have wished that the Republicans would clean the Augean stable. They've had twelve years to clear out waste, kill ineffective programs, lay off unnecessary bureaucrats, generally sober things up. They haven't done it. That job, too, is left for President Clinton.

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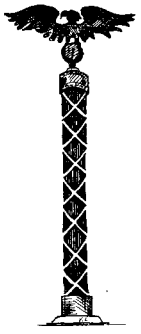
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Sweet mystery

THE BIG WINNER IN THE LAST PRESidential debate wasn't Clinton or Perot; it was Lexis/Nexis, the computer research service. Perot began by calling on the American people to "go to Lexis and Nexis, and look at what Ambassador Glaspie said" in the months leading up to the Gulf war. Bush then summed up his candidacy with a quotation from Justice Hugo Black that sounded as though it had been pulled from Lexis: "Great nations, like great men, must keep their word." Suspicious of Bush's unexpected discovery of the great civil libertarian, I punched the quote into Lexis myself and found the source: an obscure 1960 dissent in which Black excoriated his colleagues for allowing President Eisenhower to break a treaty with the Tuscarora Indians and seize their tribal lands. A White House speechwriter must have found the quote without reading the case, in the same way that White House speechwriters typed "Long w/1 Dong w/1 Silver" into the computers a year ago and found a random lower court decision that they later claimed Anita Hill had read.

A CLINTON VICTORY WOULD BE bad news for legal affairs correspondents, I'm afraid, since it would make our job considerably more boring. I doubt that we'll ever again see the likes of the Haitian refugee case, which the Supreme Court has just agreed to hear but which may become moot after the election. At every stage of the case, the Bush administration has taken conflicting positions and lashed out spitefully against its challengers. First, a group of Yale Law students, led by Professor Harold Koh, sued to offer free legal advice to the refugees who were being held at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The Justice Department tried to intimidate the students into dropping the "frivolous" suit by threatening sanctions and demanding a $10 million bond. Koh, as a result, had a lien put on his house and was turned down for a car loan. A federal appeals court then proved the claim wasn't frivolous, by ruling 2-1 for the Haitians. (The dissenting judge, incidentally, was President Bush's cousin, John Walker.) Next, Bush ordered the Coast Guard to return all refugees to Haiti, whether or not they had credible asylum claims. This violated the U.N. Protocol on Refugees, so the Justice Department suddenly changed its interpretation of the treaty, claiming that the president was no longer bound by it. ("Great nations, like great men ...") Finally, a New York appeals court ruled that the new policy also violates the Immigration and Naturalization Act, which prohibits the attorney general from deporting aliens whose "life or freedom would be threatened ... on account of political opinion." Now the administration is arguing before the Supreme Court that the lower court has "intruded intolerably into matters assigned by the Constitution to the president." (In fact, the Constitution gives Congress power over immigration policy.) If the Rehnquist Court actually does hear the case, the Haitians are probably doomed: in an obscure 6-3 decision last year, Justice Antonin Scalia suggested that the Immigration Act would not even have protected the Holocaust refugees who were turned away at New York harbor and sent back to Germany: "If a Nazi regime persecutes Jews," wrote Scalia, "it is not, within the ordinary meaning of language, engaging in persecution on account of political opinion."



WASHINGTON REALTORS ARE ALready looking forward to an influx of Democrats after January 1. But I doubt the Clinton people will be flocking to my building, a grandiose fortress by the National Zoo called the Kennedy-Warren. The location is ideal, and some of the rents surprisingly cheap, but the attitude isn't very New Covenant. Built in 1931 in a style called Aztec Art Deco, the Kennedy-Warren has a two-story ballroom with silver friezes of flappers; an ornate dining room that seats 200; a bridal shop, florist, and tailor; a hair salon; and a convenience store that sells mushroom paté, champagne, and skin magazines, but no fresh vegetables. There are also swastikas everywhere. As you approach the building, two limestone swastikas crown the carved eagles on either side of the floodlit marquee. Big aluminum swastikas zigzag between the railings of the staircase and balcony in the lobby; and there is a personal swastika on every door, tastefully disguised as a door knocker. All of the ceiling beams in the hallways, furthermore, are emblazoned with gold-painted fasces. When I moved in, a neighbor explained reassuringly that the swastikas, representing the Aztec sun and war god Huizilopochtli, were considered stylish in 1931, and went out of fashion a few years later. The most distinctive art deco fixtures, however, are the elegant old ladies who seldom leave the banquettes in the lobby: my favorite wears white gloves and smokes languidly. The building is transformed on weekends, when there is usually a lavish wedding reception in the afternoon and another in the evening. Residents in jogging clothes share the lobby with wedding guests in dinner jackets, cocktail dresses, turbans, and sashes; and everyone has the sensation of traveling on an ocean liner designed by Albert Speer. I can't imagine a more pleasantly absurd place to live, but the DLC will probably throw its victory rave somewhere else.

I KNOW ONE PERSON who would have felt at home in the Kennedy-Warren: the heroine of Ben Macintyre's *Forgotten Fatherland: The Search for Elizabeth Nietzsche.* With a three-cassette-pack of Wagner in his knapsack, Macintyre set out for the jungles of Paraguay to interview the inbred survivors of Nueva Germania, the "racially pure" colony that Nietzsche's sister founded with her husband, Bernard Förster, and a band of fair-haired Germans. Macintyre describes Elizabeth's efforts to twist her brother's philosophy to suit Hitler's aims and her own social ambitions after she returned to Germany. (A tearful führer attended her state funeral in 1935.) Although Nietzsche called his sister "a vengeful, anti-Semitic goose," Macintyre manages to convey some of her charm. "Even in her seventh decade," wrote her friend Count Kessler, "she remains a flapper at heart." Inspired by Macintyre, I started digging for further evidence that Nietzsche was no Nazi and found it in another remote place: the new C.D. of Nietzsche's piano music, recorded for the first time. I expected something bombastic and vaguely Wagnerian, like Richard Strauss's version of *Zarathustra,* which became the sound track for *2001.* Instead, the pieces are treacly reveries, with names like "From Childhood," "A Brook Flows By," and "Sweet Mystery." Nietzsche had a crush on Cosima Wagner, and, according to the program notes, he presented one of his compositions to her as a birthday present in 1870. As she sat down to play it at the piano, Richard Wagner began fidgeting with his beret. Suddenly he bolted from the room. A concerned friend who went to check on him later found Wagner on the floor, convulsed with laughter.

JEFF ROSEN

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A view from Washington

NAFTA: A GOOD IDEA "MADE IN THE U.S.A."

Few policies in the history of the United States' engagement with the world approach the success of our more than forty-year effort to unshackle the world's productivity by lowering barriers to trade. World trade, now exceeding $3 trillion per year, has increased forty-fold since the first GATT Round was launched more than four decades ago.

Now, with the completion of negotiations for a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), we are posed on the brink of a major new advance that will benefit consumers and industry alike. This agreement, which requires approval by Congress, will lead to the elimination of tariff barriers among the United States, Canada, and Mexico, giving U.S. firms better access to the multi-billion dollar goods and services markets of our neighbors.

The U.S. pharmaceutical industry strongly supports NAFTA. Although we are already a major exporting industry that employs some 200,000 people in the United States, we expect the NAFTA agreement will help us increase both exports from and employment in the United States.

One element in NAFTA, however especially fuels our enthusiasm. The agreement marks a major advance in the continuing struggle to win greater protection for "intellectual property" — the ideas, discoveries, and processes that power economic growth in a modern information and technology-driven society.

It would be hard to find, anywhere in the world, two contiguous countries that get along better than Canada and United States. We share the world's longest unpatrolled border, and our governments have a long history of cooperation. But like a wonderful neighbor with a barking dog, Canada has long presented one obstacle to mutually harmonious relations: its patent system as applied to pharmaceuticals.

Under the current Canadian system, drug developers can be compelled by the government to license their products to local companies without proper compensation. This statute not only hurts U.S. firms that want to sell their products in Canada; it also discourages the development of a Canadian research-based pharmaceutical industry, the purported objective of the Canadian law. Only four drugs or vaccines discovered in Canada have been approved for use in the U.S. since 1969, when Canada's weak patent protection law went into effect. By comparison, the U.S. pharmaceutical industry, aided by strong domestic patent laws that foster innovation, produces 40 percent of all drugs marketed throughout the world.

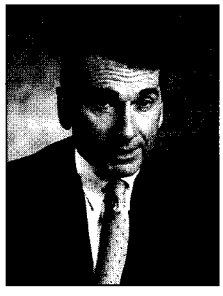
The provisions of the NAFTA affirm Canada's new resolve to end its discriminatory compulsory licensing system and to provide full product patent rights for pharmaceuticals. Newly proposed changes to the 1969 act seek to redress its limitations and to bring Canada into conformance with the patent laws of the United States and Mexico. Indeed, by the mid 1980's the Canadians came to recognize the ill-effect of the 1969 action, and set about reforming it. In 1987, the Canadian parliament adopted Bill C-22, which together with recent legislation, Bill C-91, will elevate their patent law to world-class status. This will encourage more pharmaceutical exports to Canada (and, eventually, from Canada as well), and increased exports mean more jobs.

As for our southern neighbor, Mexico last year passed a world-class patent law. NAFTA will give this law treaty status.

NAFTA also provides relief from one of the chronic ills that sap innovation: the theft or "piracy" of intellectual property. According to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, patent pirates around the globe — often with the connivance of their governments — steal $5 billion a year from U.S. pharmaceutical companies by copying drugs without compensating the patent holders.

NAFTA will require signatories to provide adequate patent terms and to enforce patent rights, both internally and at their borders. This provision will be particularly important as other nations accede to the treaty. Several nations in Latin America, where patent infringement has been a problem, have already expressed interest in joining the free trade area. Perhaps NAFTA's greatest importance lies in the example it sets for future agreements. It provides a higher standard of protection for patents, copyrights, and trademarks than any other bilateral or multilateral agreement on record. These provisions offer a challenging example for the multilateral round of negotiations in Geneva under the GATT and will serve notice on countries with inadequate intellectual property protection.

Intellectual property issues are a small part of the overall North American Trade Agreement, but they will strengthen industries whose high-tech innovations are essential ingredients in keeping modern economies competitive. As it helps tear down trade walls and builds prosperity for the U.S. and its neighbors, NAFTA will continue the tradition of forward-looking free-trade policies "Made in the U.S.A."



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